A

PRACTICAL TREATISE OF

FEAR.

Wherein the various *Kinds*, *Uſes*, *Cauſes*, *Effects*, and *Remedies* thereof are diſtinctly opened, and preſcribed, for the Relief and Encouragement of all thoſe that fear God in theſe Doubtful and Diſtracting Times.

By *John Flavell* Miniſter of the Goſpel.

Say unto them that are of a fearful heart, Be ſtrong, Fear not, behold your God will come with a vengeance, even God with a recompence, he will come and ſave you, Iſa. 35.4.

Intellige te eſſe etiam fortitudinem ſpiritus, quomodo & infirmitatem carnis, ac jam hinc ſcias quid unde facias, & quid cui ſubjicias, infirmum ſcilicet forti. Tert. Adv. Gentes.

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YALE

To the

Right Worſhipful

Sir *JOHN HARTOP*,

Knight and Baronet.

Sir,

AMong all the Creatures GOD hath made (Devils only excepted) Man is the moſt apt and able to be his own tormentor; and of all the Scourges with which he laſheth and afflicteth both his Mind and Body, none is found ſo cruel and intollerable as his own fears. The worſe the times are like to be, the more need the mind hath of ſuccour and encouragement, to confirm and fortifie it for hard encounters, but from the worſt proſpect, Fear inflicts the deepeſt and moſt dangerous wounds upon the mind of man, cutting the very nerves of its paſſive fortitude and bearing ability.

The grief we ſuffer from Evil felt, would be light and eaſie, were it not incenſed by Fear; Reaſon would do much, and Religion more, to demulce and lenifie our ſorrows, did not Fear betray the ſuccour

of both. And it is from things to come that this prospecting Creature raiseth up to himself vast Hopes, and Fears; If he have a fair and encouraging Prospect of Serene and prosperous days, from the Scheme and position of second causes, Hope immediately fills his heart with chearfulness, and displaies the signals of it in his very face, answerable to that fair benign Aspect of things: but if the face of things to come be threatning and inauspicious, Fear gains the Ascendant over the mind, an unmanly and unchristian faintness pervades it, and among the many other mischiefs it inflicts, this is not the least; that it brings the evil of to morrow upon to day, and so makes the duties of to day wholly unserviceable to the evils of to morrow; which is much as if a man having an intricate and difficult business cut out for the next day, which requires the utmost intention both of his Mind and Body, (and haply might be prosperously managed if both were duely prepared) should lie all the night restless and disquited about the event, torturing and spending himself with his own presaging Fears, so that when the day is come, and the business calls for him; his strength is no way equal to the burden of it, but he faints and fails under it.

There is indeed an excellent use that God makes of our Fears to stimulate our slothful hearts to greater vigilance, and preparation for evils, and there is a mischievous use Satan makes of our Fears, to cast us under Dispondency and unbecoming Pusillanimity; and I reckon it one of the great difficulties of Religion to cut by a threed here, & so to manag our selves under threatning or doubtful Providences, as to be touched with

with so much sense of those approaching evils, as may prepare us to bear them; and yet to enjoy that constancy and firmness of mind in the worst times, that may answer the excellent principles we are professedly governed by.

These last times are certainly the most perillous times; great things are yet to be acted upon the Stage of this World before it be taken down, and the Scena antepenultima, *latter end, I say not the last, will be a* Tragedy. *There is an* Ultima clades adhuc metuenda, *a dismal slaughter of the Witnesses of Christ, yet to be expected: the last bite of the cruel Beast will be deadly, and if we flatter not our selves; all things seem to be disposing themselves in the course of Providence towards it.*

But Sir, if our Union with Christ be sure in it self, and sure to us also; if Faith give us the daily visions and Prelibations of the World to come, what well composed Spectators shall we be of these Tragedies! Let things be tossed Susque, deque, *and the Mountains cast into the midst of the Sea, yet then the assured Christian may sing his Song upon* Alamoth, *A Song composed for God's hidden ones. This so poiseth and steddies the mind, that we may enjoy the comfort and tranquillity of a resigned will, when others are at their wits end.* Psal. 46.

With design to promote this blessed frame in my own and others hearts in these frightful times, I meditated, and now publish this smal Tract, to which a dear

friend (*from whom I have often had the fair Idea and Character of your excellent* Spirit) *hath occasioned the perfixing of your worthy* Name; *I beg pardon for such an unusual presumption, as also your charity in censuring the faults that will appear in it, when it shall come under so exact and judicious an eye, it may be useful, though it be not elegant; its seasonableness is its best commendation, and its aim better than its performance. As for you Sir, I hope Faith hath really placed your Soul in that Serene and happy station where* Seneca *fancied Moral Vertue to have placed a good man,* Fatendum est, cacumine Olympi constitutus, supra ventos & Procellas, & omnes res humanas. *Above the Storms and tempests of this unquiet and distracting World; but there are many gracious persons, at this day, labouring under their own Fears, and whose hearts are ready to fail, with looking for those things that are coming to try them that dwell upon the Earth; and possibly some what of relief may be administred to many such by this discourse, Some bivious and staggering Souls may be established; some discouraged and fainting Spirits may be revived; some doubts may be dissolved that have long perplexed gracious hearts, Whatever use it may be of to any, I humbly call in the aid of your Prayes to my own, for a special blessing upon it, and remains, Sir,*

Yours to Honour,

Love and Serve you,

JOHN FLAVELL

A PRACTICAL TREATISE OF FEAR, &c.

Isaiah 8. verse 12, 13, and part of the 14.

Say ye not a confederacy to all them to whom this people shal say a confederacy; — neither fear ye [their fear] nor be afraid; V. 13. Sanctifie the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread; V. 14. And he shal be for a sanctuary.

CHAP. I.

Wherein the Text and Context are opened, the Doctrines propounded; and the general method stated.

THere is not more diversity found in the outward features, than in the inward tempers and dispositions of men: some are as timorous as Hares

Hares and ſtart at every ſound, or yelp of a dog; others are bold as Lyons, and can face dangers without trembling, ſome fear more than they ought, and ſome before they ought, and others when they ought not at all. The carnal perſon fears man, not God; the ſtrong Chriſtian fears God, not man; the weak Chriſtian fears man too much, and God too little.

There is a Fear which is the effect of ſin, ſpringing from guilt, and hurrying the ſoul into more guilt; and there is a fear which is the effect of grace, ſpringing from our love to God and his intereſt, and driving the ſoul to God in the way of duty. The leſs fear any man hath the more happineſs, except it be of that fear which is our happineſs and our excellency.

It cannot be ſaid of any man, as it is ſaid of *Leviathan*, *Job* 41. 33. that he is made without fear, thoſe that have moſt fortitude, are not without ſome fears: And when the Church is in the ſtorms of perſecution, and almoſt covered with the waves, the ſtouteſt paſſengers in it may ſuffer as much from this boiſterous paſſion within, as from the Storm without; and all for want of throughly believing, or not ſeaſonably remembring. *That* the Lord High Admiral of all the Ocean; and Commander of all the winds is on board the Ship, to ſteer and to preſerve it in the ſtorm.

A pregnant inſtance hereof is furniſhed to our hands in this Context, where you find the beſt men trembling in expectation of the worſt events both on the Church in general, and themſelves

ſelves in particular. *Their hearts were moved like the trees of the wood, ſhaken with the Wind, Chap. 7. verſe 2.*

And indeed if their dangers were to be meaſured by ſenſe only, their fears were not above the value of the cauſe, yea their dangers ſeemed to exceed their fears; for it was the invaſion of a forein and cruel enemy, even the *Aſſyrian* who were to break in upon them like a breach of the Sea, and overflow the land of *Immanuel, v. 7. The Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river ſtrong and many; even the King of* Aſſyria *and all his glory, and he ſhal come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks.* And as the 7. *verſe* reſembles the enemy to waters, which quickly drown the countrey into which they break; ſo the 8 *verſe* tells you how far they ſhould prevail, and how near it ſhould come to a general and total ruine. *He ſhall paſs through Judah, he ſhall overflow and go over, he ſhall reach even to the neck, and the ſtretching out of his wings ſhal fill the breadth of thy land, O* Immanuel. All the body ſhould be under water, except the capital City, which remained above water.

Having thus diſcribed the power and ſucceſs of the invading enemy, in the 9 and 10 *verſes* he derides their plots and combinations, aſſuring them that although God for juſt and holy ends would permit them for a time to afflict his people, yet in the iſſue all their councels and cruelties ſhould recoyl upon themſelves, and end in their own ruine and confuſion.

And thereupon *Iſaiah* is commanded to encourage

courage the feeble and trembling hearts of such as feared God in those distracted and frightful times, ver. 11, 12, 13. *The Lord spake unto me with a strong hand and instructed me, that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, say ye not a confederacy,* &c.

God speaking to the Prophet by a strong hand, imports the strong and mighty impression that was made upon his heart by the Spirit of Prophecy: Wherein the Lord did as it were lay his hand upon him, as a man doth upon one to whom he is about to impart some special secret in a familiar way, *q. d.* Come hither *Isaiah*, (drawing him to him at the same instant with a friendly hand) take deep notice of what I am now to give thee in charge both with respect to thy self, and my elect people that follow thee; say not you a confederacy to all them to whom this people shall say a confederacy, (*i. e.*) let not these frightful tidings work upon you, as they do upon *Ahaz*, and the common multitude with him, who are so terrified and scared with the approaching dangers that all their counsels, thoughts and studies are taken up in the preventing it by making a confederacy or a league with the *Assyrian*; or if that cannot be, then with some Forein power that may secure them against the *Assyrian*, but their eyes are not all to me for protection and deliverance, they expect more from *Egypt* than from Heaven; from a broken reed, than from the rock of Ages. Fear not you their fear; Their fear drives them from God

Hos. 5. 13.

God to the creature; it first *Distracts* them, and then *Ensnares* them.

But on the contrary, see that thou, and all the faithful in the land with thee do sanctifie me in your hearts, and make me your fear, and your dread (*i. e.*) rely upon me by faith in this day of trouble, and see that you give me the glory of my wisdom, power and faithfulness; by relying intirely upon those my attributes engaged for you in so many tried promises: And do not betake your selves to such sinful and vain shifts as those do that have no interest in me, nor experience of me. This is the general scope and design of the Text; wherein more particularly you have,

1. An evil practice prohibited.
2. An effectual remedy prescribed.
3. A singular encouragement to apply that remedy.

1. An evil practice prohibited, *Fear not their fear, neither be afraid.* This is that sinful principle, which was but to apt to incline them to do as others did, *scil.* to say a confederacy. Sinful fears are apt to drive the best men into sinful compliances, and indirect shifts to help themselves.

Their fear may be understood two ways.

1. Subjectively.
2. Effectively.

1, *Subjectively*, for the self same fear wherewith the carnal and unbelieving *Jews* feared: a fear

a fear that enslaved them in bondage of Spirit: a fear that is the fruit of sin, a sin in its own nature, the cause of much sin to them, and a just punishment of God upon them for their other sins.

2. *Effectively*, Let not your fear produce in you such mischievous effects as their fear doth, to make you forget God, magnifie the creature, prefer your own wits and policies to the Almighty power, and unspotted faithfulness of God; if you say, but how shall we help it?

2. Why in the next place you have, An *Effectual remedy prescribed, But sanctifie the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear and your dread.* The fear of GOD will swallow up the fear of Man, a reverential awe and dread of God will extinguish the slavish fear of the creature; as the Sun-shine puts out fire; or as one fire fetches out another: so will this fear fetch out that.

By sanctifying the Lord of Hosts himself, is meant a due ascription of the glory of his Sovereign *Power*, wisdom and faithfulness, not only in verbal and professed acknowledgements thereof, but especially in those internal acts of affiance, resignation, and intire dependence on him, which as they are the choicest respects of the creature towards its God, and give him the greatest glory, so they are certainly the most beneficial and comfortable acts we can perform for our own peace and safety in times of danger.

If a man do really look to God in a day of trouble and fear, as to the *Lord of Hosts*, (*i.e.*) one

one that governs all the creatures, and all their actions; at whose beck and command all the Armies of Heaven and Earth are; and then can rely upon the care and love of this God, as a child in danger of trouble reposes on, and commits himself with the greatest confidence to the care and protection of his Father: O what peace, what rest must necessarily follow upon this! Who would be afraid to pass through the midst of Armed Troops and Regiments, whilest he knows that the General of that Army is his own Father? The more power this filial fear of God obtains in your hearts, the less will you dread the power of the creature. When the *Dictator* ruled at *Rome*, then all other *Officers* ceased; and so in a great measure will all other fears where the fear of God is *Dictator* in the heart. This is the Remedy.

3. And to enable us to apply this remedy in the worst and most difficult times, we have a singular *encouragement* proposed. If we will thus sanctifie the Lord of Hosts himself, by such an acknowledgment of, and child-like dependence on him in times of danger, then he will be to us for a *Sanctuary* (*i. e.*) he will surely protect, defend and provide for us in the worst times and cases, then will the Lord *Create upon every dwelling-place of mount* Zion *and upon her Assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shinning of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory* shall

Asyli loco.

Præstabit vos inaccessos, & inviolabiles ab his regibus.

ſhall be a defence, and there ſhall be a Tabernacle, for a ſhadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from the ſtorm, and from rain. Let the winds roar, the rain beat, the lightnings flaſh, you are in ſafety, and have a good roof over your heads. Hence theſe two points of Doctrine offer themſelves.

1. Doctrine.

That the beſt men are too apt to be overcome with ſlaviſh fears in times of eminent diſtreſs and danger.

2. Doctrine.

That the fear of God is the moſt effectual means to extinguiſh the ſinful fear of man, and to ſecure us from danger.

Theſe two points take in the ſubſtance and ſcope of the Text, but becauſe I deſign to treat in the following Chapters, of the *Kinds, Nature, Uſes, Cauſes, Effects,* and *Remedies* of Fear, I ſhall not diſtinctly proſecute them, but proceed in this order in the following Chapters.

CHAP. II.

Wherein the kinds and nature of Fear are opened, and particularly the diſtracting ſlaviſh Fear of Creatures.

SECT. I.

THere is a threefold Fear found in men, viz.

1. Natural

The kinds and ſorts of Fear.

1. Natural
2. Sinful
3. Religious

} Fear.

1. Natural Fear, of which all are partakers, that partake of the *common nature*, not one excepted.

Natural Fear is the trouble or perturbation of mind from the apprehenſion of approaching evil, or impending danger.

The Greek word φόβος comes from a Verb that ſignifies Flight; this is not always ſinful, but it is alwayes the fruit and conſequent of ſin. Since ſin entred into our nature there is no ſhaking off Fear, no ſooner had *Adam* tranſgreſſed, but he feared and fled, hiding himſelf among the Trees of the Garden, *Gen.* 3. 8. when he had tranſgreſſed the Covenant, he preſently feared the execution of the Curſe. Firſt he *eats*, then he *hides*. And this afflictive paſſion is from him tranſmitted and derived to all his children.

φεύγω, *fugio, perfect. med.* φυγή, *inde* φόβος *timor, fuga.*

To this natural Fear, it pleaſed our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* to ſubject himſelf in the days of his fleſh, he was afraid, yea, he was ſore amazed; *Mark* 14. 33. For though his humane nature was abſolutely free from ſin, yet he came in the *likeneſs of ſinful fleſh*; *Rom.* 8. 3.

This fear creates great trouble and perturbation in the mind; 1 *John* 4. 18. *Fear hath torment*; in proportion to the danger is the Fear, and in proportion to the Fear, the trouble and diſtraction of the mind, if the fear

fear be exceeding great reaſon is diſplaced, and can conduct us no farther, as the P*ſalmiſt* ſpeaks of *M*ariners in a Storm, *they are at their wits end*, P*ſal.* 107. 27. or as it is varied in the Margin; all wiſdom is ſwallowed up, and this is the meaning of, **Deut.** 28. 25. that they ſhould go out againſt their enemies one way, and *flee before them ſeven ways*, (*i.e.*) ſo great ſhall be the fright and diſtraction that they ſhall attempt now one way, then another, ſtriving every way, but liking none: for fear ſo far betrays the ſuccours of reaſon, that their counſels are always in uncertainty and at a loſs, and the uſual voice of a man in this condition is, *I know not what to do, I know not which way to turn.*

Rector in incerto eſt, nec quid fugiatve petatve, invenit, Ovid.

Pavidi ſemper conſilia in incerto.

Evil is the object of fear, and the greater the evil is, the ſtronger the fear muſt needs be, and therefore the terrours of an awakned and terrified conſcience muſt be allowed to be the greateſt of terrours, becauſe in that caſe a man hath to do with a great and a terrible God; and is ſcared with apprehenſions of his infinite and eternal wrath: Than which no evil is or can be greater. You ſee at what height Chriſts conflict with it wrought, when it made him ſweat as it were great clots of bloud. Of all temporal evils death is the greateſt, and therefore *Job* calls it *the King of terrours*, *Job* 18. 14. or the moſt terrible of terribles.

Dux quidamin-

Thua-

Thuanus relates two ſtrange inſtances of the fear of death, one of a certain Captain who was ſo terrified with the fear of death, that he poured out a kind of a bloudy ſweat from all the parts of his body. Another is of a young man condemned for a ſmall matter by *Sixtus Quintus*, who was ſo vehemently terrified with the fears of death, that he ſhed a kind of bloudy tears. These are ſtrange and terrible effects of fear, but vaſtly ſhort of what Chriſt felt and ſuffered, who grapled with a far greater evil than the terrors of death, even with the wrath of an incenſed God, poured out to the full, and that immediately upon him.

digno mortis metu, adeo concuſſus fuit, ut ſanguineum ſudorem toto corpore fudit. Hiſt. lib. 11.

Juvenis ob levem cauſam à Sixto V. damnatus, præ doloris vehementia fertur lacrymas cruentes fudiſſe lib. 80.

But yet evil, as evil, is rather the object of hatred, than of fear, it muſt be an eminent or near approaching evil, which we ſee not how to eſcape or put by, that provoks fear, and rouzes this Lyon. And therefore, the Saints in glory are perfectly freed from fear, becauſe they are out of the reach of all danger: Nor do we that are here in the midſt of evils fear them till we ſee them approaching us, and we ſee not how to avoid them. To hear of Fire, Plague, or the Sword in the *Indies*, doth not affright us, becauſe the evil is ſo remote from us: It's far enough off, we

are

are no danger of it; but when it is in the Town, much more when within our own dwellings, we tremble. Evil hurts us not by a simple apprehension of its nature, but of its union, and all propinquity is a degree of union, as a learned Divine speaks. And its worth Observation that all carnal security is maintained by putting evils at a great distance from us. As it is noted of these secure Sensualists, *Amos* 6. 3. *they put far from them the evil day*; the meaning is not that they did, or could, put the evil one minute farther from them in reality, but only by imagination and fancy, they shut their own eyes and would not see it, lest it should give an unpleasing interruption to their mirth; and this is the reason why death puts the living into no more fear, because it is apprehended as remote, and at an undetermined distance, whereas if the precise time of death were known, especially if that time were near, it would greatly scare and terrifie. Dr. *Reynolds.*

This is the nature of natural Fear, the infelicity of nature which we all groan under the effects of: It is in all, the creatures in some degree, but among them all, none suffer more by it than man, for hereby he becomes his own tormentor, nor is any torment greater than this, when it prevails in an high degree upon us. Indeed all constitutions and tempers admit not the same degrees of fear; some are naturally courageous, and stout like a Lyon for magnanimity and fortitude; others exceeding timorous and fain

faint-hearted like the Hare or Hart; one little Dog will make an hundred of them fear and flee before him. *Luther* was a man of great courage and preſence of mind in dangers; *Melancthon* very timorous and ſubject to deſpondency; thus the difference betwixt them is expreſſed in one of *Luthers* Letters to him; "I am well nigh a "ſecure ſpectator of things, and eſteem not any "thing, theſe fierce and threatning "Papiſts. I much diſlike thoſe "anxious cares, which as thou wri- "teſt, do almoſt conſume thee. *Epiſt. ad Melanch. An.* 1549.

There might be as great a ſtock of grace in one as in the other; but *Melancthon's* grace had not the advantage of ſo ſtout and couragious a temper of body and mind as *Luther's* had. Thus briefly of Natural Fear.

SECT. II.

THere is a Fear which is formally and intrinſically ſinful, not only our infelicity, but our fault, not our ſimple affliction and burden, but our great evil and provocation; and ſuch is the fear here diſſuaded, called *Their Fear.* (*i.e.*) the fear wherewith carnal and unbelieving men do fear, when dangers threaten them; and the ſinfulneſs of it lies in five things.

1. In the ſpring and cauſe of it, which is unbelief, and an unworthy diſtruſt of God, when we dare not rely upon the ſecurity of a divine promiſe, nor truſt to Gods protection in the way of our duty: This was the very caſe of that people

ple, *Isa.* 30. 15. *Thus saith the* Lord, *the holy one of Israel, in returning and rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength; and ye would not, but ye said no, for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and we will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift, one thousand shal flee at the rebuke of one,* &c.

Thus stood the case, *Sennacherib* with a mighty Host was ready to invade them, this puts them into a fright, in this distress GOD assures them by the mouth of the Prophet, That *in returning and rest they should be saved, in quietness and confidence should be their strength.* The meaning is, never perplex your selves with various counsels and projects to secure your selves under the wings of *Egypt*, or any other Protector, but with a composed, quiet, and calm temper of mind rest upon my power by faith, take my promises for your security, this shall be your salvation, and your strength, more effectual to your preservation, than Armies, Garisons, or any creatures defence in the World; one act of faith shall do you better service than *Pharoah* and all his forces can do.

But ye said no, *q.d.* we dare not trust to that, a good *horse* will do us more service at such a time than a good promise; *Egypt* is a better security in their eye than Heaven. This is the fruit of gross infidelity. And as wicked men do thus forsake God and cleave to the creature in time of trouble, so there is found a spice of this distrustfulness of God producing fear and trouble in

in the best men. It was in the Disciples themselves, *Matth.* 8. 26. *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* A Storm had befallen them at Sea, danger began to threaten them, and presently you find a storm within, their fears were more boisterous than the winds, and had more need of calming than the sea, and it was all from their unbelief, as Christ tells them; the less their faith, the greater their fear: If a man can but rely upon God in a promise, so far as he is enabled to believe, so far he will reckon himself well secured. *Illyricus* in his Catalogue of the witnesses relates this remarkable passage of one *Andreas Proles*, a Godly aged Divine, who lived somewhat before *Luther*, and taught many points soundly, according to his light then, he was called to a *Synod* at *Millain*, and afterwards in the *Lateran*, where opposing a proposition of the *Pope*, about burdening the Church with a new Holiday, he was brought into much danger, and escaping very narrowly from *Rome*, he bought him a *Bow* and *Weapons*, but as he was riding, he began to bethink himself, That the cause was not *his* but *Gods*, and not to be maintained with sword and bow; and if it were, yet what could such a decrept old man do with weapons, upon which he threw away his weapons, committed himself, his cause, and his journey to God, relyed upon his promises more than sword or bow, and came home safe, and afterward died quietly in his bed.

Illyr. *Cat. Test. lib.* 19.

2. The sinfulnes of fear lies in the excess and immoderacy of it, when we fear more than we ought; for it may be truely said of our fears as the *Philosopher* speaks of waters, *difficilè suis terminis continentur*, 'tis hard to keep them within bounds, every bush is a Bear, every petty trouble puts us into a fright, our fear exceeds the *value* & *merit* of the cause. 'Tis a great sin to love or fear any creature above the rate of a creature, as if they were Masters of all our temporal & eternal comforts. Thus when the men of *Israel* heard of the confederacy and conjunction of their enemies against them, the Text saith, *their hearts were moved, as the Trees of the wood are moved with the wind, Isa.* 7. 1. or as we use to say, *proverbially*, like an *Aspine leaf*: 'tis a sad sight to behold men shaking and quivering as the trees do in a windy day; yet thus did the house of *David* partly through the remembrance of past calamities, but especially through incredulity in Gods protecting care in their present and future dangers; yea, this is too often the fault of good men in creature fear, as well as in creature love, to transgres the due bounds of moderation. 'Tis noted of *Jacob* though a man of much Faith and one that had the sweetest encouragement to strengthen it, both from former experience and Gods gracious promises to be with him; yet when *Esau* was come nigh, he was *greatly afraid* & *distressed*, *Gen.* 32. 7. It was but little before that God had graciously appeared to him, and sent a Royal guard of Angels to attend him, even two hosts or Armies of Angels, *verse* 1, 2. and

yet aſſoon as *Eſau* approached him, he was afraid, yea greatly afraid and diſtreſſed, notwithſtanding ſuch an encouraging viſion as this was.

3. The ſinfulneſs of our Fears lies in the inordinacy of them; to fear it more than we ought, is bad enough, but to magnifie its power above the power of a creature; to exalt the power of any creature by our fears, and give it ſuch an Aſcendent over us, as if it had an Arbitrary and abſolute dominion over us, or over our comforts, to do with them what it pleaſed; this is to put the creature out of its own Claſs and rank, into the place of God, and is therefore a very ſinful and evil fear.

To *truſt* in any creature as if it had the power of a God to *help* us, or to *fear* any creature, as if it had the power of a God to *hurt* us, is exceeding ſinful, and highly provoking to God. This inordinate truſt is taxed and condemned in *Iſ.* 31. 3. They would needs go down to *Egypt* for help, and truſt in their horſes, horſemen, becauſe they were ſtrong; *i.e.* in their opinions they were able to ſecure them againſt all thoſe dangers the Prophet from the Lords own mouth had threatned them with, but to take them off from this ſinfull and inordinate dependence on the creature, he tells them, *v.* 3. *Now the* Egyptians *are men and not God, and their horſes fleſh, and not ſpirit; when the Lord ſhall ſtretch forth his hand, both he that helpeth ſhall fall, and he that is holpen ſhall fall down; and they ſhall fail together*, q. d.

'Tis a ſinful and dangerous miſtake for one creature to give that truſt and dependence to another

another creature which is due onely to God, to look upon men as if they were Gods, and horſes as if they were Spirits: All creatures, even the ſtrongeſt, are but as the Hop, the Vine, or the Ivy, if they claſp about the pole, the wall, or the oak; they may be ſupported, as you alſo may by leaning upon God, but if they depend, and intangle themſelves one upon another, as you and the *Egyptians* do, you ſhall fail, and fall all together.

And as one creature is apt inordinately and ſinfully thus to truſt and lean upon another; ſo there is as great a proneſs in the creatures inordinately to fear and dread each other, as if the creature feared were rather a God, than a man, rather a Spirit than fleſh; and thus our fear magnifies and exalts the creature, and puts it as it were into the room and place of God. This was the ſin which God rebuked in his own people, *Iſai.* 5. 12, 13. *I even I am he that comforteth thee, who art thou, that thou ſhouldeſt be afraid of a man, that ſhall die, and of the ſon of man which ſhall be made as graſs, and forgetteſt the Lord thy Maker*, &c. See how fear exalts man, and depreſſeth God, it thinks upon the noxious power of men ſo much, that it forgets the ſaving power of God, as if that ſtood for nothing; thus a mortal worm that ſhal periſh as the graſs, eclipſes the glory of the great God, that ſtretcheth forth the Heavens, and laid the foundations of the Earth.

And this was the evil againſt which Chriſt cautioned his own Diſciples, in *Matth.* 10. 28. Fear

not

not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the ſoul; but rather fear him which is able to deſtroy both ſoul and body in hell. q. d. Have a care you never fear any man, be he armed with never ſo much power, and rage; as if the power of making or marrying you for ever, were in his hands, as if you lay at the feet of his will, and pleaſure to be ſaved or ruined for ever. Fear not him that can only touch your bodies as if he would damn your ſouls, inveſt not any creature with the ſoveraign and incommunicable power of God.

4. The ſinfulneſs of Fear conſiſts in the diſtracting influence it hath upon the hearts of men, whereby it diſcompoſeth and unfits them for the diſcharge of their duties.

Fear ſometimes puts men into ſuch an hurry, and their thoughts into ſuch diſorder, that for the preſent they have ſcarce any ſuccour or relief from their graces, or from their reaſon; for under an extraordinary fear both grace and reaſon, like the wheels of a watch, wound above its due height, ſtand ſtill, and have no motion at all. It is rare to find a man of that largeneſs, and conſtancy of heart and mind, in a day of fear, that was found in *Jehoſhaphat*, 2 *Chro.* 20. 2, 3. *Then there came ſome that told* Jehoſhaphat *ſaying, there cometh a great multitude againſt thee, from beyond the* Sea, *on this ſide* Syria, *and behold they be in* Hazazon, Tamar, *which is* Engedi, *and* Jehoſhaphat *feared, and ſet himſelf to ſeek the Lord.* He ſet himſelf (*i. e.*) he compoſed and fixed his heart for Prayer in the time of ſo

great a fright, and terrible an Alarm: But it is rare to find such constancy and evenes of mind as this; in like cases it is with most in great frights, as the Prophet describes the condition of the Jews, *Isaiah* 22. 2, 3. when the City of *Jerusalem* was besieged and the enemy came under the walls of it; that which a little before was the *joyous City*, or as some read, the revelling City, is now in such a panick fear, that it is full of stirrs and tumults, some run up to the tops of the houses either to hide or bewail themselves, or take a view of the dreadful enemy without; others prevent the sword of the enemy, and die by fear before hand, their own apprehensions of misery killed them, before the sword of any other enemy once touched them, but you read of none that ran into their closets to seek the Lord; the City was full of stirrs, but not of prayers; alas, Fear made them cry to the mountains, rather than to God; *ver.* 5. The best men find it hard to keep their thoughts from wandering and their minds from distraction in the greatest calm of peace, but a thousand times harder in the hurries and tumults of fear.

5. The sinfulnes of Fear consists in the power it hath to dispose and incline men to the use of sinful means to put by their danger, and to cast them into the hands and power of temptation. *The fear of man bringeth a snare*, Prov. 29. 25. or puts and layes a snare before him; Satan spreads the net, and Fear like the stalking horse drives men right into it. It was fear which drew *Abraham* that great believer into the snare of dis-

su-

ſumulation, to the great diſparagement of religion, for it was ſomewhat an odd ſight to ſee *Abimelech* an heathen ſo ſchooling an *Abraham* for it, as he did, *Gen.* 20.9. And for the ſame evil, you find GOD chiding his people in *Iſaiah* 57. 11. *And of whom haſt thou been afraid, or feared that thou haſt lied, and haſt not remembred me?* There is a double lie occaſioned by Fear, one in *word*, another in *deeds*: Hypocriſie is a lie done, a practical lie, and our Church Hiſtory abounds with ſad examples of diſſumulation through fear: 'tis Satans great engine to make his Temptations victorious and ſucceſsful with men.

SECT. III.

3. There is an holy and laudable Fear, a Fear which is our *treaſure*, not our *torment*, the chief ornament of the Soul, its beauty and perfection, not its infelicity or ſin, *viz.* the awful filial fear of God; natural fear is a pure or ſimple paſſion of the ſoul: Sinful fear is the diſordered and corrupt paſſion of the ſoul; but this is the natural paſſion ſanctified, and thereby changed and baptized into the name and nature of a Spiritual grace. This fear is alſo mentioned in in my Text, and preſcribed as an Antidote againſt ſinful fears; it devours carnal fears as *Moſes* ſerpent did thoſe of the *Enchanters*. It's one of the ſoreſt judgements to be in the fear of man day and night, *Deut.* 28. 65, 66, 67. and one of the ſweeteſt mercies to be in the fear of God all the day long, *Prov.* 23, 17. The fear of men ſhortens our days, *Iſaiah* 22. 34. but the fear

of the Lord prolongeth our days, *Prov.* 10. 27. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, *Prov* 14. 27. But the fear of man a fountain of miſchiefs and miſeries. By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil, *Prov.* 16. 6. but by the fear of man, men run themſelves into evil, *Pro.* 29. 25.

This Fear is a *gracious habit or principle planted by God in the ſoul, whereby the ſoul is kept under an holy awe of the eye of God, and from thence is inclined to perform and do what pleaſeth him, and to ſhun and avoid whatſoever he forbids and hates.*

1. It is planted in the ſoul as a permanent and fixed habit, it is not of the natural growth and production of mans heart, but of ſupernatural infuſion and implantation; *Jer.* 32. 40. I *will put my fear into their inward parts.* To fear man is natural, but to fear God is wholly ſupernatural.

2. This gracious fear puts the ſoul under the awe of Gods eye, *Pſalm* 119. 161. *My heart ſtandeth in awe of thy Word.* 'Tit the reproach of the ſervants of men to be *eye-ſervants*, but it is the praiſe and honour of Gods ſervants to be ſo.

3. This reſpect to the eye of God inclines them to perform and do whatſoever pleaſeth him, and is commanded by him; hence fearing God, and working righteouſneſs are connected and linked together; *Act.* 10. 35. If we truely fear *God*, we dare not but do the things he commands, and if his fear be exalted in our hearts to an high degree, it will enable us to obey him in duties accompanied with deepeſt ſelf denyal, *Gen.* 22. 12. *Now I know thou feareſt God, ſeing thou haſt*

not

not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

4. This fear ingageth, and in some degree inableth the soul, in which it is to shun and avoid whatsoever is displeasing to God, and forbidden by him, in this *Job* discovered himself a true fearer of GOD, he would not touch what GOD had forbidden, and therefore was honoured with this Excellent Character, *He was one that feared GOD and eschewed evil, Job* 1. 3.

And thus of the several kinds of Fear.

CHAP. III.

Shewing the various uses of Fear, both Natural, Sinful, and Religious, in the Government of the world by providence.

SECT. I.

HAving taken a brief view of the several kinds and sorts of Fear that are found among men, our next work will to be open the Uses of them in the Government of this world, for one way or other they all subserve the most wise and holy purposes of God therein. And we will first enquire into.

1. *The use of Natural Fear.*

Which if we well consider, it will be found

exceeding neceſſary and uſeful to make man a governable creature by Law, and conſequently the order, comfort, and tranquillity of the world neceſſarily depends upon it. How immorigerous and intractable would the corruptions of mans nature make him, and uncapable of any moral reſtraint from the moſt flagitious and barbarous crimes, had not God planted ſuch a paſſion as this in his nature, which like a * bridle crubs in the corrupt propenſions thereof. If fear did not clap its manacles and fetters upon the wild and boyſterous luſts of men, they would certainly bear down all milder motives and break looſe from all ingenuous bands of reſtraint, the world would inevitably be filled with diſorders, tumults, rapines, theft, murders, and all manner of uncleanneſs, and unrighteouſneſs, *nec hoſpes ab hoſpite tutus*, men would become like the fiſhes of the ſea, as the Prophet complains, *Hab.* 1. 14. where greater the ſwallow up a multitude of the ſmaller fry alive at one gulp; propriety could not be maintained in the world, no mans perſon could be ſafe or inviolate; power and op-

* *Eſt timor inſtar fræni quo equus regitur, hic metus ſi toleretur, omnia conciderent.* Lava. in pro. 29. v. 25.

Intellectualis creatura eo ipſo quod creatura eſt, ſuperiorem habet cujus providentiæ & ordinationi ſubjaceat: & qua intellectualis eſt capax eſt gubernationis moralis qua dirigatur ad bonum, & arceatur â malo, & alis lex eſt ille ſimpli-

opportunity to do mischief would measure out to men their Lot and Inheritance, and consequently all Societies must disband and break up. We say, and the observation is sure, he that fears not his own, may easily be master of another mans life. 'Tis law, and fear of punishment that keeps the World in order; men are afraid to do evil, because they are afraid to suffer it, they see the Law hath inseparably linked penal and moral evils together, if they will presume upon the one, they must necessarily pull the other upon them too; and this keeps them in some order, and decorum; there would be no order or security without Law; but if *Laws* had no annexed penalties to inforce them and give them their Sanction as good there were no Laws; they would have no more power to restrain the corruptions of mens hearts, than the new cords or green withes had to bind *Samson*; And yet if the severest penalties in the world, were annexed to, or appointed by the Law, they could signifie nothing to the ends of Government without *Fear*. This is that tender sensible power or passion on which threatnings work, and so brings men under moral government and restraint, *Rom.* 13.3,4. *Magistrates are a terror to evil works; wilt thou not then be afraid of the power? but if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain.* And by this means a world of evil

citer necessaria, ut convenienter suæ naturæ vivere possit. Suarez de leg. lib. 1. cap. 3.

is restrained and prevented in the world.

It was the custom and policy of the *Persians*, (I cannot say laudable) at the death of their Kings to give every men liberty for the space of five dayes to do what he would, and such mischiefs were done every where by the unbridled lusts of men in those days, that it made the people long and pray for the instalment of their next King, it exceedingly endared the Government to them; Blessed be GOD for Law and Government, for crubing by this means the raging lusts of the hearts of men, and procuring rest and comfort for us in the world this way.

2. *The Uses of Sinful Fear.*

This is formally evil and sinful in its own nature, as well as the fruit of sin, and off-spring of sinful nature, yet the Lord knows how to over-rule it in his providential Government of the world to his own wise and holy purposes, and he doth so;

First, by making it his scourge to punish his enemies. If men will not fear *God*, they shall fear *men*, yea, they shall be made a terror to *themselves*. And indeed it is a dreadful punishment for GOD to deliver a man up into the hands of his own fears: I think there is scarce a greater torment to be found in the world, than for a man to be his own *Tormentor*, and his minde made a Rack, an Engine of torture to his Body, we read in 2 *Kings* 17. 25. that God sent Lyons among the people, but certainly that

that is not ſo bad as for GOD to let looſe our own Fears upon us. No Lyon is ſo cruel as this paſſion, and therefore *David* eſteemed it ſo great a deliverance to be delivered from all his fears *Pſal.* 34. 4. It is a dreadful threatning which is recorded in *Deut.* 28. 65, 66, 67. againſt the diſobedient and rebellious, *Thou ſhalt find no eaſe, neither ſhal the ſole of thy foot have reſt, but the Lord ſhall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and ſorrow of mind, and thy life ſhal hang in doubt before thee, and thou ſhalt fear day and night, and ſhalt have no aſſurance of thy life; in the Morning thou ſhalt ſay, would God it were* Even, *and at* Even *thou ſhalt ſay, would God it were Morning, for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou ſhalt fear, and for the ſight of thine eyes which thou ſhalt ſee.* When fear hath once ſeized the heart, you may ſee deaths colours diſplayed in the face. What a diſmal life do they live, who have neither any peace by day, nor reſt by night, but weariſom days and nights are appointed to them. The days of ſuch men are tireſome days, they wiſh for the night hoping it may give them a little reſt, but their fears go to bed with them, their hearts pant, and meditate terror, and then, O that it were day again!

2. By Fear God puniſhed his enemies in hell: It is that *flagellum Dei*, terrible ſcourge of God, by which a great part of the torment of the damned is inflicted one them. Divines uſe to make this tripartite diſtinction of hell torments, and tells us God puniſhes the wicked there partly by

remembrance what is paſt, *viz.* the mercies and means they once had, but are there irrecoverably loſt, partly by the ſenſe of theſe things preſent, even the wrath of God overlaying ſoul & body, and partly by the fear of what is to come; and ſure this is not the leaſt part of the miſery of thoſe wretched caſt-aways:

Calamitoſus eſt animus futuri anxius, & ante miſerias miſer. Senec.

O that fearful expectation of fierie indignation! more and more of Gods wrath ſtill coming on as the waves of the Sea, thruſting forward one another: Yea, this is that which makes the Devils tremble. *James* 2. 19. the word ſignifies ſuch a noiſe as the rote of the ſea, or the roaring of the waves when they break themſelves againſt the rocks, and this is occaſioned by the fears which are continually held as a whip over them.

3. Providence makes uſe of the ſlaviſh fears and terrors of wicked men to diſſipate and ſcatter them, when they are combined and confederated againſt the people of God; by theſe have they been routed and put to flight when there hath been no other viſible power to do it: It's ſaid, *Pſal.* 78. 55. God caſt out the Heathen before his people *Iſrael*; and by what means were thoſe mighty nations ſubdued? not by the ſtrength or multitudes of the *Iſraelites*, but by their own fears; for its ſaid, *Joſhuah* 24. 11, 12. *The Lord ſent the hornet before them which drave them out.* Theſe *Hornets* where the fears and

and terrors of their own guilty and preſaging minds, which buzzed and ſwarmed in their own breaſts and ſtung them to the heart, worſe than the ſwords of the *Iſraelites* could do. *Theodoret* relates a memorable ſtory of *Saperes* King of *Perſia* who had beſieged many Chriſtians in the City *Niſibis*, and put them to great ſtraits, ſo that little hopes of ſafety were left them, but in the depth of their diſtreſs God ſent an Army of Hornets and Gnats among their enemies; whichgot into the *trunks* of their Elephants, and and ears and noſtrils of their Horſes which ſo enraged them, that they brake their harneſs, caſt their Riders, and put them all to the rout; by which providence the Chriſtians eſcaped. Theſe *Hornets* were terrible to them, but fears which are *Hornets* in a figure, are ten thouſand times more terrible; they will quell and ſink the very hearts of the ſtouteſt men, yea they will quickly make thoſe, that in their pride and

Crabrones per metaphoram repentinum terrorem ſignificant, qui in animos malè ſibi conſcios à Deo immiſſus fuit. Lavat. in loc.

Sapores rex Perſarum cum urbem Niſibi in qua erant Chriſtiani, obſediſſet, eamque affligeret, magna vis Crabronum, & Culicum repentè venit, & in Promuſcides cavas Elephantorum conſedit, complevitque aures Equorum, ita ut ſeſſores excuſſerint, & turbatos ordines in fugam converterint. Hiſt. lib. 2. cap. 30.

and haughtineſs took themſelves rather to be Gods, and Almighty Powers, to know themſelves to be but men, as it is, *Pſal.* 9. 20. *Put them* in fear O Lord, that they may know themſelves to be but men: One fright will ſcare them out of a thouſand found conceits and idle dreams.

3. *The uſes of Religious* Fears.

If God can make ſuch fruit to grow upon ſuch a bramble as the ſinful ſlaviſh fear of man is, what may we expect from Religious Fear, a choice root of his own ſpirits planting? The uſes and benefits hereof are innumberable, and ineſtimable, but I muſt contract and will only inſtance in three ſpecial uſes of it.

1. By this Fear the people of God are excited to, and confirmed in the way of their duty, *Eccleſ.* 12.13. *Fear God, and keep his commandments.* It is, *Cuſtos utriuſque Tabulæ*, the keeper of both Tables? becauſe the duties of both Tables are influenced by it. 'Tis this Fear of God that makes us have a due reſpect to all his commands, and it is as powerful to confirm us in, as it is to excite us to our duties, *Jer.* 32. 40. *I will put my fear into their inwards, and they ſhall not depart from me.* Look as he that ſoweth doth not regard the winds, but goes on in his labour whatever weather the face of Heaven threatens; ſo he that fears God will be found in the way of his duty, let the aſpect of the times be never ſo lowring and diſcouraging; and truly, this is no ſmall

ſmall advantage in times of frightes and diſtractions. Slaviſh fear ſets a man upon the Devils ground, Religious fear upon Gods ground? and how vaſt an odds is there in the choice of our ground, when we are to endure a great fight of affliction.

2. Another excellent uſe of this Fear, is to preſerve the purity and Peace of our Conſciences, by preventing guilt, and grief therein, *prov.* 16. 6. *The fear of the Lord is to depart from evil.* See how it kept *Joſeph*, *Gen.* 39. 9. and *Nehemiah*, *chap.* 5. 15. And this benefit is invaluable, eſpeciallie in a day of outward calamity and diſtreſs; look in what degree the fear of GOD prevails in our hearts, anſwerable thereunto will the ſerenity, peace, and quietneſs of our Conſciences be; and proportionable unto that will our ſtrength and comfort be in the evil day, and our courage and confidence to look dangers in the face.

3. To conclude, a principal uſe of this fear of GOD is to awaken us to make timely proviſions for future diſtreſſes, that whenſoever they come, they may not come by way of ſurprize upon us. Thus *Noah* being moved with fear, prepared an Ark, *Heb.* 11. 7. It was the inſtrument of his and his Families ſalvation. Some men owe their death to their fears, but good men in a ſenſe owe their lives to their fears; ſinful fears have ſlain ſome, and godly fears have ſaved others. *A wiſe man feareth, and departeth from evil,* (ſaith Solomon) *but a fool rageth and is confident.* His fears give him a timely

Alarm

Alarm before the enemy fall into his quarters and beat them up, by this means he hath time to get into his chambers of security and rest, before the storm fall; but the fool rageth and is confident, he never fears till he begin to feel, yea, most times he is past all hope, before he begin to have any fears.

These are some of the uses God makes of the several kinds of Fear.

CHAP. IV.

Wherein the springs and causes of Sinfull Fear are searched out, and the evil of such fears thence discovered.

SECT. I.

HAving shewn before the *Kinds* and *Uses* of Fear, it remains that next we search out the springs from which these waters of *Marah* are derived, and fed. And,

1. *Cause.*

First, We shall find the sinful fears of most good men to spring out of their ignorance, and the darkness of their own minds. All darkness disposes to fear, but none like intellectual darkness, you read, *Cant.* 3. 8. how *Solomons* Life-guard had every man his sword upon his thigh, *because of fear in the night*: The night is the

the frightful season in the dark, every *bush* is a *bear*, we sometimes smile by day to see what silly things those were that scared us in the night: so it is here, were our judgement but duly informed, how soon would our hearts be quieted?

Now there is a five fold ignorance out of which our fears are generated.

1. Ignorance of GOD, either we know not, or at least, duly consider not his Almighty power, vigilant care, unspotted faithfulness, and how they are all engaged by Covenant for his people: This ignorance and inconsiderateness lay at the root of their fears, *Isa.* 40. 27, 28. *My way*, (saith Sion) *is hid from the* Lord, *and my judgement passed over from my God*, words imparting a suspicion that God had left her out of the account of his providence, and the Catalogue of those whom he would look after and take care for.

But were it once throughly understood and believed what power their is in Gods hand to defend us, what tenderness in his bowels to commiserate us, what faithfulness in all the promises in which they are made over to us, O how quiet and calm would our hearts be! Our courage would quickly up, and our fears down.

2. Our ignorance of men generates our fears of men, we fear them, because we do not know them, if we understood them better, we would fear them less, we over-value them, and then fright at them: They say the Lyon is painted more fierce than he is; I am sure our

fancy

fancy paints out man more dreadful than indeed he is. If wicked men especially, if the multitudes of wicked be confederated against us, our hearts quail, and presently apprehend inevitable ruine. *The floods of the ungodly made me afraid*, saith *David*, (*i.e.*) the multitudes of them, which he thought like a flood or mighty torrent of waters, must needs sweep away such a straw, such a feather as he was before them; but mean time we know or consider not that they have no power against us, but what is given them from above, and that it's usual with God to cramp their hands, and clap on the bands of restraint upon them when their hearts are fully set in them to do mischief; did we see and consider them as they are in the hand of our God, we shoujd not tremble at them as we do. 3. Ignorance of *our selves*, and the relations we have to God, creates slavish fears in our hearts. For did believers but throughly understand how dear they are to GOD, what relations they sustain to him, of what account and value they are in his eyes, and how well they are secured by his faithful promises and gracious presence, they would not start and tremble at every noise, and appearance of danger as they do, God reckoned it enough to cure all *Abraham*'s sinful fears when he told him how his God stood ingaged for his defence, *Gen.* 15. 1. *Fear not* Abraham, *I am thy shield.* *Isa.* 51. 12.

And Noble *Nehemiah* valued himself in times of danger and fear, by his interest in God, as his

his word import, *Nehem.* 6. 11. the conſpiracy againſt him was ſtrong, the danger he and the faithful with him at that time were in, was extraordinary, ſome therefore adviſed to flee to the *Temple*, and Barracado themſelves there againſt the enemy, but *Nehemiah* underſtood himſelf better, *Should ſuch a man as* I *flee*? *And who being as I am would flee*? ſaith he, *q. d.* a man ſo called of God to this ſervice, a man under ſuch promiſes, a man of ſuch manifold and manifeſt experiences; ſhould ſuch a man flee? Let others who have no ſuch encouragements flee if they will, for my part I will not flee. I remember it was an argument uſed by *Tertullian* to quiet the fears, and ſtay the flights of *Chriſtians* in thoſe bloody times; Art thou afraid of a man, O Chriſtian, when devils are afraid of thee, as a *Priſoner* is of his *Judge*, and whom the whole world ought to fear, as being one that ſhall judge the world: O that we could without pride and vanity but value our ſelves duely according to our Chriſtian dignities, and priviledges, which if ever it be neceſſary to count over and value, it is in ſuch times of danger and fear, when the heart is ſo prone to dejection and ſinking fears.

Tertul. *de fuga.*
Times hominem Chriſtiane, quem timeri oportet ab Angelis, Siquidem Angelos judicaturus es: quem timeri oportet à Demoniis, ſiquidem & in Demoniis, accepiſti poteſtatem: quem timeri oportet ab univerſo mundo, ſiquidem & in te mundus judicatur.

4. Ig-

4. Ignorance of our dangers and troubles cauſes our frights and terrors, we miſtake them and therefore fright at them; we are ignorant of two things in our troubles among others. *viz.*

1. The comforts that are in them.
2. The outlets and eſcapes from them.

There is a vaſte odds betwixt the outward appearance and face of trouble and the inſide of it; 'tis a Lyon to the eye at a diſtance, but open it, and there is honey in its belly. *Paul* and *Silas* met that in a priſon that made them ſing at midnight, and ſo have many more ſince their day.

And as we are ignorant of the comforts that are ſometimes found in our troubles: ſo of the outlets and doors of eſcape God can, and often doth open out of trouble; *To God the Lord belong the iſſues from death, Pſal.* 68. 20. *he knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of temptation,* 2 *Peter* 2. 9. he can with every temptation make a way to eſcape, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. the poor captive exile caſt upon nothing but dying in the pit, making their graves in the land of their captivity, *Iſai.* 51. 14, For they could think upon none but the uſual methods of deliverance, power, or price, and they had neither; little did they dream of ſuch immediate influences of God upon the Kings heart, to make him diſmiſs them freely contrary to all rules of State policy, *Iſaiah* 45. 13.

5. But eſpecially the fears of good men ariſe out of their ignorance and inconſiderateneſs of the

the *Covenat of Grace*, if we were better acquainted with the nature, extent, and ſtability of the Covenant, our hearts would be much freed thereby from theſe tormenting paſſions, this Covenant would be a *Panacea*, a univerſal remedy againſt all our fears, upon ſpiritual or temporal accounts, as will be made evident hereafter in this diſcourſe.

2. *Cauſe.*

2. Another cauſe and fountain of Sinful Fear, is guilt upon the Conſcience: A ſervant of ſin cannot but firſt or laſt be a ſlave of Fear, and they that have done evil, cannot chuſe but expect evil, no ſooner had *Adam* defiled and wounded his Conſcience with guilt, but he preſently trembles and hides himſelf, ſo it is with his children, God calls to him not in a threatning, but gentle dialect, not in a tempeſt, but in the coole of the day, yet it terrifies him, there being in himſelf *mens conſcia facti*, a guilty and condemning Conſcience *Gen.* 3. 8 'Tis *Seneca*'s obſervations, That a guilty Conſcience is a terrible whip and torment to the Sinner, perpetually laſhing him with ſolicitous thoughts and fears, that he knows not where to be ſecure, nor dare he truſt to any promiſes of protection, but diſtruſts all; doubts and jealouzeth all, of ſuch it is ſaid, *Job* 15. 21. That

Male facinorum conſcientia flagellari, & plurimum illi tormentorum eſſe, eo quod perpetuo illam ſolicitudo urget, ac verberat quod ſponſoribus ſecuritatis ſuæ non poteſt credere. Senec. Epiſt. 97.

a dreadful ſound is in their ears, noteing not only the effects of real, but alſo of imaginary dangers, his own preſaging mind and troubled fancy ſcares him where no real danger is, ſutable to that *Prov.* 28. 1. *The wicked fleeth when none purſues, but the righteous is bold as a Lyon.* juſt as they ſay of ſheep, that they are afrighted by the clattering of their own feet, when once they are ſet a running; ſo is the guilty Sinner with the noiſe of his own Conſcience which ſounds nothing in his ears, but miſery, wrath, and hell; we may ſay of all wicked men in their fright as *Tacitus* doth of *Tyrants*, that if it were poſſible to open their inſide, their mind, and conſcience, many terrible ſtripes and wounds would be found there; and it's ſaid, *Iſai.* 33. 14. The ſinners in *Sion* are afraid trembling taketh hold on the hypocrite fear; and trembling as naturally ariſeth out of guilt, as the ſparks do out of a fiery charcol, Hiſtories abundantly furniſh us with ſad examples of the truth of this obſervation. *Catiline* that monſter of wickedneſs would ſtart at any ſudden noiſe, being haunted with the furies of his own evil conſcience. *Charles* the IX. after his bloudy and barbarous Maſſacre of the *Proteſtants*, could neither ſleep nor wake without muſick to divert his thoughts. And our *Richard* the Third after the murther of his two innocent Nephews, ſaw diverſe images or ſhapes like Devils in his ſleep,

Si recludantur mentes Tyrannorum poſſe aſpici laniatus & ictus. Annal.

sleep, pulling and haling him. Mr. *Ward* tells of a *Jesuit* in *Lancashire* who being followed by one that had found his Glove, out of no other design but to restore it to him, but being pursued by his own guilty Conscience also, he leaped over the next hedge and was drowned. And remarkable is that which Mr. *Fox* relates of *Cardinal Crescentius* who fancied the devil walking in his chamber, and sometimes couching under his Table as he was wtiting Letters to *Rome* against the Protestants. *Impius tantum metuit, quantum nocuit,* so much mischief as Conscience tells them they have done, so much it bids them expect. *Wolfius* tells us of one *John Hofmeister* who fell sick with the very terrours of his own Conscience in his Inn, as he was travelling towards *Auspurge* in *Germany*, and was frighted by his own Conscience to that degree that they were fain to bind him in his bed with chains, and all that they could get from him was, I am cast away for ever, I have grievously wounded my own Conscience.

To this wounded and trembling conscience is opposed *the spirit of a sound mind,* mentioned 2 *Tim.* 1. 7. *God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind;* A sound mind, is in this place the same thing with a pure and peaceable Conscience, a mind or Conscience not infirmed or wounded with guilt, as we say a sound or heal body which hath no disease to infirm it, such a mind is opposed to the spirit of fear; it will make a man bold as a Lyon; *Nil conscire tibi, nullâ Pallescere culpâ, hic murus aheneus esto*-----

An

Guilt the fountain of Fear.

An evil and guilty Conſcience foments fears and terrours three ways.

1. By aggravating ſmall matters and blowing them up to the height of the moſt fatal and deſtructive evils ſo it was with *Cain*, *Gen.* 4. 14. *Every one that meets me will ſlay me.* Now every child was a *Giant* in his eye, and any body he met, his over-match. A guilty Conſcience gives a man no ſight of his enemy, but through a magnifying, or a multiplying glaſs.

2. It begets Fears, by interpreting all doubtful caſes in the worſt ſenſe that can be faſtened upon them; *Peſſimus in dubiis Augur timor.* If the *Swallows* do but chater in the chimney, *Beſſus* interprets it is to be a diſcovery of his crime, that they are telling tales of him, and ſaying, *Beſſus* killed a man. Nay,

3. If a guilty Conſcience have nothing to aggravate, and magnifie, nor any doubtful matter to interpret in a frightful ſenſe, it can and often doth create fears and terrors out of nothing at all: the rules of Fear are not like the rules in *Arithmetick* where many nothings make nothing, but fear can make ſomething out of nothing, yea, many things and great things out of nothing at all. *Pſal.* 53, 5, *there were they in great fear where no fear was*; here was a great fear raiſed or created out nothing at all; had their fears been examined, and hunted home

In metu & periculo plura & majora videntur metuentibus, cum creduntur facilius tum finguntur impunius. Cicero.

home to its original, it would have been found a pure creature of fancy, a *Chimæra* having no *fundamentum in re*, no other foundation but a troubled fancy, and a guilty Conſcience; thus it was with *Paſhur*, he was a very wicked man, and a bitter enemy to the *Prophet Jeremy*, and if there be none to fright and terrifie from abroad, rather than he ſhall want it, he ſhall be a terror to himſelf, *Jer.* 20. 3, 4. he was his own bug-bear, afraid of his own ſhadow; and truely this is a great plague and miſery; he that is a terror to himſelf, can no more flee from terrors than he can flee from himſelf. O the efficacy of Conſcience! how doth it arreſt the ſtouteſt ſinners, and make them tremble, when there is no viſible external cauſe of fear! *Nemo, ſe judice, nocens abſolvitur.*

1. *Object.* But may not a good man whoſe ſins are pardoned be afrighted with his own fancies, and ſcared with his own imaginations?

Sol. No doubt he may, for there is a twofold fountain of fears, one in the body, another in the ſoul, one in the conſtitution, another in the conſcience; it is the affliction and infelicity of of many pardoned and gracious ſouls to be united and married to ſuch diſtempered and ill habited bodies as ſhall afflict them without any real cauſe from within, and wound them by their own diſeaſes and diſtempers, and theſe wounds can no more be prevented or cured by their reaſon or Religion, than any other bodily diſeaſe ſuppoſe an Ague or a Feaver can be ſo cured. Thus Phyſicians tell us when a-

duſt

duſt choler and melancholly overflows and abounds in the body, as in the Hypochondriacal diſtemper. &c. what ſad effects it hath upon the mind as well as upon the body, there is not only a ſad and fearful aſpect or countenance without, but ſorrow, fear and afflicting thoughts within; this is a ſore affliction to many good men whoſe conſciences are ſprinkled with the blood of *Chriſt* from guilt, but yet God ſees good to clog them with ſuch afflictions as this for their humiliation, and for the prevention of worſe evils.

Fernel. Pathiol. *lib.* 2. *c.* 16. *Corporis habitus ſiccus & macilentus, aſpectus inconſtans, horridus ac mœſtus, in morbis animi metus & mœſtitia, taciturnitas, ſolitudo, inanis rerum commentatio ſomnus turbulentus, horrendis inſomnias fluctuans, & agitatus ſpectris rerum nigrarum, &c.*

2. *Object.* But many bold and daring ſinners are found notwithſtanding all the guilt with which their conſciences are loaded, can look danger in the face without trembling, yea, they can look death it ſelf the King of terrors in the face, with leſs fear than better men.

Sol. True, but the reaſon of that is from a ſpiritual judgement of God upon their hearts and conſciences, whereby they are hardned, and ſeared as with an hot iron, 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. and ſo Conſcience is diſabled for the preſent, to do its office it cannot put forth its efficacy and activity now, when it might be uſeful to their ſalvation.

tion, but it will do it to purpose hereafter when their case shall be remediless.

3. *Cause.*

3. We see what a forge of Fears a guilty conscience is, and no less is the sin of *Unbelief*, the real and proper cause of most distracting and afflictive fears; so much as our Souls are empty of *faith*, they are in times of trouble filled with *fear*: We read of some that have died by no other hand but their own fears; but we never read of any that died by fear, who were once brought to live by faith: If men would but dig to the root of their fears, they should certainly find unbelief there, *Matth.* 8. 26. *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* The less faith still the more fear: Fear is generated by unbelief, and unbelief strengthened by fear, as in nature there is an observable κυκλογενεσις circular generation, vapours beget showers, and showers new vapours; so it is in things moral, and therefore all the skill in the world can never cure us of the disease of fear, till God first cure us of our unbelief; Christ therefore took the right method, to rid the disciples of their fear, by rebuking their unbelief. The remains of this sin in Gods own people is the cause and fountain of their fears. and more particularly to shew how fear is generated by unbelief, let a few particulars be heedfully adverted.

1. Unbelief weakens and stumbles the assenting act of Faith, and thereby cuts off from the soul in a great measure its principal relief a-

gainſt dangers and troubles. It is the uſe and office of Faith to reallize to the Soul, the invi-ſible things of the world to come, and there-by encourage it againſt the fears and dangers of the preſent world: Thus *Moſes forſook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the King, for he endured, as ſeeing him that is inviſible, Heb.* 11. 27. If this aſſenting act of Faith be weakned or ſtaggered in the ſoul, if once inviſibles ſeem uncertainties, and viſibles the only realities, no wounder we are ſo ſcared and frighted when theſe viſible & ſenſible comforts are expoſed & endangered, as they often are, and will be in this mutable world. That man muſt needs be afraid to ſtand his ground, that is not throughly perſwaded the ground he ſtands on is firm and good; 'tis not to be wondred that men ſhould tremble, who ſeem to feel the ground ſhake and reel under them.

2. Unbelief ſhuts up the refuges of the Soul in the Divine promiſes, and by leaving it without thoſe refuges, muſt needs leave it in the hands of fears and terrors. That which fortifies and emboldens a Chriſtian in evil times, is his dependence upon God for potection, *Pſal.* 143. 9. *I flee unto thee to hide me.* The cutting off of this treat (which nothing but unbelief can do) deprives the ſoul of all thoſe ſuccours and ſupports which the promiſes afford, and conſequently fills the heart with anxity and fear.

multa fidem promiſſa levant.

3. Unbelief makes men negligent and care-

leſs in providing for troubles before they come and ſo brings them by way of ſurprize upon them, and the more ſurprizing any evil is, the more frightful it is always found to be, we cannot think that *Noah* was ſo afrighted at the flood when it began to ſwell above all the hills and mountains as all the reſt of the world was, nor was there any reaſon that he ſhould, having foreſeen it by Faith, and made proviſion for it, *Heb.* 11. 7. *By Faith* Noah *being warned of God, prepared an Ark. Auguſtine* relates a very pertinent and memorably ſtory of *Paulinus* Biſhop of *Nola*, who was a very rich man, both in goods and grace, he had much of the world in his *hands*, but little of it in his *heart*, and it was well there was not; for the *Goths* a barbarous people breaking into that City, like ſo many Devils fell upon the prey, thoſe that truſted to the treaſures which they had, were deceived and ruined by them; for the rich were put to tortures to confeſs where they hid their moneys: This *good Biſhop* fell into their hands and loſt all he had, but was ſcarce moved at the loſs, as appears by his prayer which my *Author* relates thus, *Lord let me not be troubled for my gold and ſilver, thou knoweſt it is not my treaſure, that I have laid up in Heaven, according to thy command. I was warned of this judgement before it came, and provided for it, and where all my intereſt lyes. Lord thou knoweſt.* Auguſt. *de civit. Dei, lib.* 1. *c.* 10.

Thus Mr. *Bradford*, when the *Keepers* wife came running into his chamber ſuddenly, with words

words able to have put the most men in the world into a trembling posture, O Mr. *Bradford*, I bring you heavy tidings, to morrow you must be burned, and your chain is now buying; he put off his hat and said, *Lord I thank thee, I have looked for this a great while, it is not terrible to me, GOD make me worthy of such a mercy*: see the benefit of a prospect of, and preparation for sufferings.

4. Unbelief leaves our dearest interests and concerns in our own hands, it commits nothing to *God*, and consequently must needs fill the heart with distracting fears when eminent dangers threaten us. Reader, if this be thy case, thou wilt be a *Magor missabib*, surrounded with terrors, whensoever thou shalt be surrounded with *dangers & troubles*. *Believers* in this as well as in many other things have the advantage of thee, that they have committed all that is precious and valuable to them, into the hands of God by Faith, to him him they have committed the keeping of their souls, 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. and all their eternal concernments, 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. And these being put into safe hands, they are not distracted with fears about other matters of less value, but can trust them where they have intrusted the greater, and enjoy the quietness and peace of a resigned Soul to God, *Prov.* 16. 3. but as for thee, thy life, thy liberty, yea, which is infinitely more than all these things, thy Soul will lie upon thy hands in the day of trouble, and thou wilt not know what to do with them, nor which way to dispose of them, O these be the

dreadful

dreadful ſtreights and frights that unbelief leaves men in; 'tis a fountain of Fears, and diſtractions. And indeed it cannot but diſtract and confound carnal men in whom it reigns and is in its full ſtrength, when ſad experience ſhews us what fears and tremblings the very remains and relicts of this ſin begets in the beſt men, who are not fully freed from it. If the unpurged relicts of unbelief in them, can thus darken, and cloud their evidences, thus greaten & multiply their dangers, if it can draw ſuch ſad and frightful concluſions in their hearts, notwithſtanding all the contrary experiences of their lives, as we ſee in that ſad inſtance, 1 *Sam.* 27. 1. What panick fears, and unrelieved terrors muſt it put thoſe men under, where it is in its full ſtrength and dominion.

4. *Cauſe.*

Moreover, we ſhall find many of our Fears raiſed and provoked in us by the *Promiſcuous adminiſtrations* of providence in this world, when we read in Scripture, That *there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked, and all things come alike to all*, *Eccleſ.* 9. 2. That when the ſword is drawn, God ſuffers it to cut off the righteous and the wicked, *Ezek.* 21. 3. The Sword makes no difference, where God hath made ſo great a difference by grace, it neither diſtinguiſhes faces, nor breaſts, but is aſſoon ſheathed in the bowels of the beſt, as of the worſt of men; when we read how the ſame fire of Gods indignation, devours the green tree and the dry tree, *Ezek.* 20. 47. How the baſket of good figs (the

Embleme of the beſt men of thoſe times) were carried into *Babylon* as well as the bad, *Jer.* 24. 5. How the fleſh of Gods Saints hath been given for meat to the fowls of heaven, and to the beaſts of the field, *Pſal.* 97. 12. and how the wicked have devoured the man that is more righteous than himſelf, as it is *Habuk.* 1. 13. I ſay when we obſerve ſuch things in Scripture and find our obſervations confirmed by the accounts and hiſtories of former and later ages, when we reflect upon the unſpeakable miſeries and butcheries of thoſe plain hearted and precious ſervants of Chriſt, the *Albingenſes* and *Waldenſes*, how they fell as a prey to their cruel adverſaries notwithſtanding the convincing ſimplicity and holineſs of their lives, and all their fervent cries, and appeals to God, how the very flower of the reformed Proteſtant intereſt in *France* was cut off with more than barbarous inhumanity, the Streets were waſhed, and the Canals of *Paris* ran with their precious bloud. What horrid and unparallelled tortures the ſervants of God felt in that cruel Maſſacre in *Ireland*, a hiſtory too tragical for a tender hearted Reader to ſtay long upon: And how in our own Land, the moſt eminent Miniſters and Chriſtians were ſent to heaven in a fiery chariot in thoſe doleful *Marian* dayes: I ſay when we read and conſider ſuch things as theſe, it rouzes our fears, and puts us in frights when we ſee our ſelves threatned with the ſame enemies and dangers; when the feet of men that carried out the dear ſervants of God in bloody wind-

winding sheets to their graves, stand at the door to carry us forth next, if providence loose their chain, and give them a permission so to do; and our fears one this account are heightned by considering and revolving these four things in our thoughts, which we are alwayes more inclined to do, than the things that should fortifie our faith, and heighten our Christian courage; as,

1. We are very apt to consider that as the same race and kind of men that committed these outrages upon our brethren, are still in beeing, and that their rage and malice is not abated in the least degree, but is as fierce and cruel as ever it was, *Gal.* 4. 29. *As then he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.* So it was then, and just so it is still, the old enmity is entailed upon all wicked men from generation to generation; *multi adhuc sunt qui clavum sanguine Abelis rubentem adhuc circumferunt. Cain*'s club is to this day carried up and down the world stained with the blood of *Abel*, as *Butholizer* speaks; 'tis a rooted antipathy, and it runs in a blood, and will run as long as there are wicked men from whom and to whom it shal be propagated, and a devil in hell, by whom it will not fail to be exasperated and irritated.

2. We know also that nothing hinders the execution of their wicked purposes against us, but the restraints of providence: should GOD loose the chain, and give them leave to act forth the malice and rage that is in their hearts

no pity would be shewen by them, or could be rationally expected from them, *Psal.* 124. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. We live among Lyons, and them that are set on fire of hell, *Ps.* 57. 4. the only reason of our safety is this, that he who is the keeper of the Lyons, is also the shepherd of the sheep.

3. We find that GOD hath many times let loose these Lyons upon his people, and given them leave to tear his lambs in pieces, and suck the bloud of his *Saints*; how well soever he loves them, yet hath he often delivered them into the hands of his enemies, and suffered them to perpetuate and act the greatest cruelties upon them; the best men have suffered the worst things; and the Histories of all ages have delivered down unto us the most tragical relations of their barbarous usage.

4. We are also conscious to our selves how far short we come in holiness, innocency, and spiritual excellency of those excellent persons who have suffered these things, and therefore have no ground to expect more favour from providence than they found; we know also there is no promise in the Scriptures to which they had not as good a claim and tittle as our selves: With us are found as great, yea, greater sins than in them, and therefore have no reason to please our selves with the fond imaginations of extraordinary exemptions. If we think these evils shall not come in our dayes, 'tis like many of them thought so too, and yet they did, and we may find it quite otherwise, *Lam.* 4. 12. *Who would have thought that the enemy*

my should have entered in at the gates of Jerusalem? The revolving of these and such like considerations in our thoughts, and mixing our own unbelief with them, creates a world of fears even in good men, till by resignation of all to God, and acting faith upon the promises that assure us of the sanctification of all our troubles, *Rom.* 8. 28. Gods presence with us in our troubles, as that *Ps.* 91. 15. his moderation of our troubles to that measure and degree in which they are supportable. *Isa.* 27. 8. And the safe and comfortable outlet and final deliverance from them all at last, according to that in *Rev.* 7. 17. We do at last recover our hearts out of the hands of our fears again, and compose them to a quiet and sweet satisfaction in the wise and holy pleasure of our God.

5. *Cause.*

5. Our immoderate love of life, and the comforts and conveniences thereof may be assigned as a proper and real ground and cause of our sinful fears, when the dangers of the times threaten the one or other: did we love our lives less, we should fear and tremble less than we do. It is said of those renowned Saints, *Rev.* 12. 11. *They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their Testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the Death.*

They overcame, not only the fury of their enemies without them, but their sinful fears within them; and this victory was atchieved by their mortification, to the inordinate and immoderate love of life, certainly their own

fears had overcome them, if they had not first overcome the love of life: It was not therefore without very great reason that our Lord injoyned it upon all his disciples and followers, to *hate their own lives*, *Luke* 14. 26. not absolutely, but in comparison and competition with him, (*i.e.*) to love it in so remiss a degree, as to slight and undervalue it as a poor low thing in such a comparison, he foresaw what sharp tryals and sufferings were coming upon them and he knew if the fond and immoderate love of life were not overcome and mortified in them, it would make them warp and bend under such temptations.

This was it that freed *Paul* from slavish fears, and made him so magnanious and undaunted; indeed he had less fear upon his spirit though he was to suffer those hard and sharp things in his own person, than his friends had who only Sympathized with him, and were not farther concerned than by their own love and pity: He spake like a man who was rather a spectator than a sufferer, *Acts* 20. 24, 25. *none of these things move me*, saith he, Great soul! not moved with bonds and afflictions? how did he attain so great courage and constancy of mind in such deep and dreadful sufferings? It was enough to have moved the stoutest man in the world, yea, and to have removed the resolutions of any that had not loved Christ better than his own life; but life was a triffle to him in comparison with Jesus Christ, for so he tells us in the next words, *I count not my life dear unto me;*

me; *q. d.* 'Tis a low priz'd commodity in my eyes, not worth the saving or regarding on such sinful terms: O how many have parted with Christ, peace, and eternal life; for fear of losing that which *Paul* regarded not. And if we bring our thoughts closer to the matter, we shal soon find that this is a fountain of fears in times of danger, and that from this excessive love of life, we are rack'd and tortured with ten thousand terrors. For,

1. Life is the *greatest* and neareſt *interest* men naturally have in this world, and that which wraps up all other inferiour interests in it self, *Job* 2. 4. *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life.* It is a real truth, though it came from the mouth of the father of lies; afflictions never touch the quick till they touch the life; liberty, estates, and other accommodations in this world receive their value and estimation from hence, if life be cut off these accidents perish, and are of no account, *Gen.* 25. 32. *Behold, I am at the point to die,* (*said* Esau) *and what profit shall this birth-right do to me*?

2. Life being naturally the deareſt interest of men in this world, the richeſt treasure; and most beloved thing on earth to a natural man; that which strikes at, and endangers life, must in his eyes be the greateſt evil that can befal him; on this account death becomes terrible to men, yea, as *Job* calls it, the *King of Terrors*, *Job* 18. 14. The black prince or the prince of clouds and darkness, as some translate those words: Yea,

so

ſo terrible is death upon this account, that the very fear of it hath ſometimes precipitated men into the hands of it, as we ſometimes obſerve in times of peſtilence, the exceſſive fear of the Plague hath induced it.

Nonnullos ob timorem mortis ſuotianæ periiſſe refert Gabenus. Quid igitur homo timore mortis quæ eſt terribiliſſima, ex ſententia Ariſtotelis *alioquin; pene omnium, moriatur, mirandum non eſt Fugæ mali, ipſum interdum accerſit, quod liquet exemplis eorum, quorum metus mortem à judice ipſis deſignatam prevenit.* Stern. *de* mort. p. 167.

3. Though death be terrible in any ſhape, in the mildeſt form it can appear in; yet a violent and bloudie death by the hands of cruel and merciles men, is the moſt terrible form that death can appear in; 'tis now the King of terrors indeed, in the moſt ghaſtly repreſentation and frightful *form*, in its *ſcarlet Robes* and terrifying formalities. In a violent death all the barbarous cruelty that the wit of our enemies can invent, or their malice inflict, is mingled together; in a violent death are many deaths contrived into one, and it often times approaches men by ſuch ſlow and deliberate paces that they feel every tread of its foot as it advanceth towards them. *Moriatur, ut ſentiat ſe mori,* Let him ſo die, (ſaid the Tyrant) that he may feel himſelf to die; yea, and how he dies by inch-meal or ſlow and lingring degrees; this is exceeding frightful, eſpecially to thoſe that

that are of a more ſoft and tender nature and temper, who muſt needs be ſtruck through with the terrours of death, except the Lord arm them againſt it with aſſurance of a better life, and ſweeten theſe bitter apprehenſions by the foretaſts of it. This is enough to put even ſanctified nature into a conſternation, and make a very gracious heart to ſink, unleſs it be ſo upheld by Divine ſtrength and comfort: And hence come many, very many of our fears and terrors, eſpecially when the ſame enemies that have been accuſtomed to this bloody work, ſhall be found confederating and deſigning again to break in upon us, and act over again as much cruelty as ever they have done upon our brethren in times paſt.

6. Cauſe.

To conclude, many of our ſinful fears and conſternations flow from the influences of Satan upon our phantaſies. They ſay winds, and ſtorms are oft times raiſed by Satan both by ſea and land, and I never doubted but the Prince of the power of the air by Gods permiſſion can, and often doth put the world into great frights and diſturbances by ſuch tempeſts, *Job* 1. 19. He can raiſe the loftieſt winds, pour down roaring ſhowers, rattle in the air with fearful claps of thunder, and ſcare the lower world with terrible flaſhes of lightning. And I doubt not but he hath by the ſame permiſſion a great deal of influence and power upon the fancies and paſſions of men, and can raiſe more terrible ſtorms & tempeſts *within us*, than ever we heard or felt with-

without us: he can by leave from God approach our *Phantasies*, disturb and trouble them exceedingly by forming frightful Idea's there; for Satan not only works upon men mediately by the ministry of their external senses, but by reason of his Spiritual angelical nature, he can have immediate access to the internal sense also as appears by diabolical dreams, and by practising upon that power of the Soul, he influences the passions of it, and puts it under very dreadful apprehensions and consternations: Now if Satan can provoke and exasperate the fury and rage of wicked men, as it is evident he can do, *Rev.* 2. 10. and so disturb our Fancies and influence our passions, as there is no reason to doubt but by leave from God he can do, as well as he can go to the magazines and store-houses of thunder, lightnings, and storms. O what inward storms of Fear, can he shake our hearts withal, and if GOD give him but a permission how ready will he be to do it? seing it is so conducible to his design: for by putting men into such frights he at once weakens their hands in duty as is plain from his attempt this way upon *Nehemiah*, *chap.* 6. 13. and if he prevail there, he drives them into the snares, and trains of his temptations, as the fisherman and fowler do the birds and fishes into their nets, when once they have flusht and frighted them out of their coverts. And thus you have some account of the principal and true causes of our Sinful Fears.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Laying open the ſinful and lamentable effects of ſlaviſh and inordinate Fear both in carnal and regenerate perſons.

SECT. I.

HAving taken a view in the former chapters of the Kinds and Cauſes of Fear, and ſeen what lies at the root of Slaviſh Fear and both breeds and feeds it, what fruit can we expect from ſuch a curſed Plant, but gal & wormwood, fruits as bitter as death it ſelf? Let us then in the next place examine and well conſider theſe following and deplorable effects of Fear to excite us to apply our ſelves the more concernedly to thoſe directions that follow in the cloſe of this Treatiſe for the cure of it. And,

1. *Effect.*

The firſt *Effect* of this ſinful and exhorbitant paſſion is *diſtraction* of mind and thoughts in duty; both *Cicero* and *Quintilian* will have the word *tumultus*, a tumult to come from *timor multus*, much fear, 'tis a compound of thoſe two words; much fear raiſes great uproars and tumults in the Soul, and puts all into hurries and diſtractions, ſo that we cannot attend upon any ſervice of God, with profit or comfort. It was therefore

therefore a very necessary *mercy* that was requested of God, *Lu.* 1. 74. *That we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without Fear.* For it is impossible to serve God without distractions, till we can serve him without the slavish fear of enemies. The reverential fear of God is the greatest spur to duty, and choicest help in it, but the distracting fears of men will either wholly divert us from our duty, or destroy the comfort and benefit of our duties; 'tis a deadly snare of the Devil, to hinder all comfortable intercourse with God.

It is very remarkable, that when the Apostle was giving his advice to the *Corinthians*, about marriage in those times of persecution and difficulty, he commends to them a single life as most eligible; where it may be without other sinful inconveniencies, and that principally for this reason, *That they might attend upon the Lord without distraction*, 1 *Cor.* 7. 35. He foresaw what streights, cares, and fears must unavoidably distract them in such times that were most clogged and incumbred with *families*, and *relations*: when a man should be thinking, O what shall I do now to get my doubts and fears resolved *about my interest in Christ*? How may I so behave my self in my sufferings as to credit *Religion*, and not become a scandal and stumbling stone to others? His thoughts are taken up with other *cares and fears*! O what will become of my wife and poor little ones! what shall I do with them, & for them, to secure them from danger! I doubt not but it is a great design of the devil

to keep us in continual alarms and frights, and to puzzle our heads and hearts with a thousand difficulties which possibly may never befall us, or if they do, shall never prove so fatal to us as we fancy them, and all this to unfit us for our present duties, and destroy our comfort therein; for if by frights and terrors of mind he can but once distract our thoughts, he gains three great points upon us, to our unspeakable loss.

1. Hereby he will cut off the freedom and sweetness of our communion with God in duty, and what an empty shell will the best duties be, when this kernel *is* wormed out by such a subtile artificer? Prayer as *Damascen* aptly expresses it, is Ἀνάβασις τοῦ νοῦ the ascension of the mind or soul to God; but distraction clips its wings; he can never offer up his soul and thoughts to God, that hath not the possession of them himself; and he that is under distracting fears possesseth not himself. The life of all communion with God in Prayer, consists in the harmony that is betwixt our hearts and words, and both with the will of God, this harmony is spoiled by distractions, and so Satan gains that point.

2. But this is not all he gains, and we lose by distracting fears; for as they cut off the freedom and sweetness of our intercourse with God in prayer, so they cut off the soul from the succours and reliefs it might otherwise draw from the promises. We find when the *Israelites* were in great bondage, wherein their minds were distracted with fears and sorrows they regarded not the supporting promises of deliverance

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ſent them by *Moſes*, *Exod.* 6. 9. *David* had an expreſs and particular promiſe of the Kingdom from the mouth of God, which muſt needs include his deliverance out of the hand of *Saul*, and all his ſtratagems to deſtroy him; but yet when eminent hazards were before his eyes, he was afraid, and that fear betrayed the ſuccours from the promiſe, ſo that it drew a quite contrary incluſion, 1 *Sam.* 27. 1. *I ſhal one day periſh by the hand of* Saul: And again he is at the ſame point, *Pſal.* 116. 11. *All men are liars*, not excepting *Samuel* himſelf who had aſſured him of the Kingdom. This is always the property and nature of fear (as I ſhewed before) to make men diſtruſt the beſt ſecurity when they are in eminent peril: But Oh, what a miſchief is this! to make us ſuſpicious of the promiſes which are our chief relief and ſupport in times of trouble: Our fears will unfit us for prayer, they will alſo ſhake the credit of the promiſes with us and ſo great is the damage we receive both ways that it were better for us to loſe our two eyes, than two ſuch advantages in trouble. But;

3. This is not all, by our preſent fears we loſe the benefit and comfort of all our paſt experiences, and the ſingular relief we might have from all that faithfulneſs and goodneſs of God which our eyes have ſeen in former ſtreights and dangers, the preſent fear clouds them all, *Iſa.* 51. 12, 13. Men and dangers are ſo much minded, that God is forgotten, even the God that hath hitherto preſerved us, though our former fears told us, the enemy was daily ready to devour

vour us. All theſe ſweet reliefs are cut off from us by our diſtracting fears, and that at a time when we have moſt need of them.

2. *Effect.*

Diſſimulation and Hypocriſie is the fruit of ſlaviſh Fear; diſtraction you ſee is bad enough, but diſſimulation is worſe than diſtraction, and yet as bad as it is, fear hath driven good men into this ſnare; it will make even an upright ſoul warp and deny from the rules of that integrity and candor which ſhould be inſeparable at all times from a Chriſtian: Of whom (ſaith God to his *Iſrael*) haſt thou been afraid, that thou haſt lied, and haſt not remembred me? God finds falſhood, and charges it upon Fear, *q. d.* I know it was againſt the reſolutions of my peoples hearts thus to diſſemble, this certainly is the effect of a fright; Who is he that hath ſcared you in this evil? It was *Abraham*'s fear that made him diſſemble to the reproach of his Religion, *Gen.* 20. 2, 11. And indeed it was but an odd ſight to ſee an heathen ſo ſchooling and reproving great *Abraham* about it as he there doth.

It was nothing but fear that drew his ſon *Iſaac* into the like ſnare, *Gen.* 29. 7. And it was fear that overcame *Peter* againſt his promiſe as well as principle to ſay concerning his dear Saviour, *I know not the man*, Matth. 26. 69. Had *Abraham* at that time remembred, and acted his Faith freely upon what the Lord ſaid to him, *Gen.* 17. 1. *Fear not* Abraham I *am thy ſhield*, he had eſcaped both the ſin and ſhame into which he fell, but even that great believer was foiled by

by his own fears; and certainly this is a great evil, a complicated miſchief. For,

1. By theſe falls and ſcandals, Religion is made vile and contemptible in the eyes of the world, it reflects with much reproach upon GOD and his promiſes, as if his Word were not ſufficient ſecurity for us to rely upon in times of trouble, as if it were ſafer truſting to our wit, yea, to ſin, than to the Promiſes.

2. It greatly weakens the hands of others and proves a ſore diſcouragement to them in their tryals, to ſee their brethren faint for fear, and aſhamed to own their principles; ſometimes it hath this *miſchievous effect*, but it is always improved by Satan and wicked men to this purpoſe. And,

3. It will be a terrible blow and wound to our own Conſciences, for ſuch flaws in our integrity we may be kept *waking* and *ſighing* many a night. O ſee the miſchiefs of a timorous and faint ſpirit.

3. *Effect.*

Slaviſh Fears of the Creature exceedingly ſtrenghten our temptations in times of danger, and make them very efficacious and prevalent upon us. *Prov.* 29. 25. *The fear of man bringeth a ſnare.* Satan ſpreads the net, but we are not within its reach, till our own fears drive us into it; the recoyling of our ſpirits from ſome eminent danger, may cauſe the pulſe of a true Chriſtian to intermit and faulter, how regular ſoever it beats at other times, this will cauſe great *trepidation & timidity* in men that are ſincere and upright, and that is it that brings the ſnare on the

their souls. *Aaron* was a good man, and Idolatry he knew to be a great sin, yet Fear prevailed with that *good man* to give too much way to that great evil, Ex. 32. 22. *Thou knowest the people that they are set upon mischief*; saith he in his own excuse, in the matter of the golden calf, *q. d.* Lord I durst do no otherwise at that time, the people were violently and passionately set upon it; had I resisted them, it might have cost me dear.

It was fear that prevailed with *Origen* to yeeld so far as he did in offering incence to the *Idol*, the consideration of which Fact brake his heart to pieces. It was nothing but fear that made *David* play the fool, and act so dishonourably as he did, 1 *Sam.* 21, 12. Fear is a snare in which Satan hath caught as many souls as in any other of his stratagems and toyls whatsoever. It were easie to give instances, so many and so sad, as would inlarge this head even to tediousness, but I chuse rather to come to the particulars wherein the danger of this snare of the Devil consists. And,

1. Herein lyes the ensnaring danger of sinful fear, that it drives men out of their proper station, out of their place and duty, beside which there is none to be found but what is Satans ground. The subtile enemy of our salvation is aware that we are out of Gun shot, beyond his reach, whilst we abide with God in the way of our duty; that the Lord is with us, whilst we are with him, and there is no attempting our ruine under the wings of his protection. If ever therefore he meaneth to do any thing upon us, he

he muſt get us off that ground, and from under thoſe wings, and there is nothing like Fear to do this; then we are as the birds that are wandring from their neſts, *Prov.* 27. 8. or like *Shimei* out of his limits.

2. Fear is uſually the firſt paſſion in the Soul that beats a parley with the enemy, and treats with the temper about terms of rendition; and as the *French* proverb is, *The Caſtle that parleys, is half wone.* 'Tis fear that conſults with fleſh and blood, whilſt faith is ingaged with God for the ſupply of ſtrength to endure the ſiege; we have a ſad and doleful inſtance of this in *Spira*; he tells us how his own fears betrayed him, by parleying with the temper, for thus Mr. Baron in the Hiſtory of his life, records the occaſion of his fall. *Whilſt* Spira *was toſſing upon the reſtleſs waves of doubts, without Guide to truſt to, or Haven to ſue to for ſuccour: on the ſudden, Gods ſpirit aſſiſting, he felt a calm, and began to diſcourſe with himſelf in this manner; Why wandereſt thou thus in uncertainties? Unhappy man! caſt away fear, put on thy ſhield of faith; where is thy wonted courage, thy goodneſs, thy conſtancy? Remember that Chriſt's glory lyes at the ſtake, ſuffer then without fear, and he will defend thee, he will tell thee what thou ſhalt anſwer; he can beat down all danger, bring thee out of priſon, raiſe thee from the dead: conſider* Peter *in the dungeon, the Martyrs in the fire,* &c.

Now was Spira *in a reaſonable quiet, being reſolved to yeeld to theſe weighty reaſons; yet holding it wiſdom to examine all things, he conſults alſo with fleſh*

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and blood; thus the battel renews, and the fleſh begins in this manner: Be well adviſed, fond man conſider reaſon on both ſides, and then judge, how canſt thou thus overween thine own ſufficiency, as thou neither regardeſt the examples of thy progenitors, nor the judgement of the whole Church; doſt thou not conſider what miſery this dayes raſhneſs will bring thee unto? Thou ſhalt loſe all thy ſubſtance gotten with ſo much care and travel, thou ſhalt undergo the moſt exquiſite torments that malice it ſelf can deviſe, thou ſhall be counted an Heretick of all, and to cloſe up all, thou ſhalt die ſhamefully: What thinkeſt thou of the loathſome ſtinking Dungeon, the bloody Ax, the burning Faggot? Are they delightful, &c. Thus through fear he firſt parlied with the Tempers, conſulted with fleſh and blood, and at laſt fainted and yielded.

3. 'Tis fear that makes men impatient of waiting Gods time and method of deliverance, and ſo precipitates the ſoul, and drives it into the ſnare of the next temptation; *Iſai.* 51. 14. *The Captive exile haſteth to be delivered out of the pit,* any way or means of eſcape that comes next to hand, ſaith Fear, is better than to lie here in the pit; and when the ſoul is thus prepared by its own fears, it becomes an eaſy prey to the next temptation, by all which you ſee the miſchief that comes by fear in times of danger.

4. *Effect.*

4. Fear naturally produceth Puſillanimity, and

and cowardlineſs in men, a poor low ſpirit; that preſently faints and yeelds upon every ſlight aſſault; it extinguiſheth all Chriſtian courage and magnanimity where ever it prevails, and therefore you find it joyned frequently in the Scriptures with diſcouragement, *Deut.* 1. 21. *Fear not, neither be diſcouraged with fainting and trembling.* *Deut.* 20. 3. *Let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble*; with diſmayedneſs. *Deut.* 31. 6, and faint heartedneſs, *Iſai.* 7. 4. theſe are the effects and conſequents of ſinful fear; And how dangerous a thing it is to have our courages extinguiſhed, and faintneſs of heart prevail upon us in a time when we have the greateſt need and uſe of courage and our perſeverance, peace and eternal happineſs rely and depend ſo much upon it, let all ſerious Chriſtians judge, 'tis ſad to us and diſhonourable to Religion to have the hearts of women, as it's ſaid of *Egypt*, *Iſa.* 19. 16. when we ſhould play the men, as the Apoſtle exhorts us, 1 *Cor.* 16. 13. We find in all ages thoſe that have manifeſted moſt courage for Chriſt in time of tryal, have been thoſe whoſe Faith hath ſurmounted Fear, and whoſe hearts were above all diſcouragements from this world.

Such a man was *Baſil*, as appears by his answer to *Valens* the Emperour, who tempting him with offers of preferment, received this anſwer. *Offer theſe things*, ſaid he, *to children*; and when he threatned him with grievous ſufferings, he replyed, *Threaten theſe things to your Paraſites, Gallants, that give themſelves to pleaſure, and are afraid to die.*

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And this was the ſpirit of courage magnanimity with which the generality of the Primitive Chriſtians were animated, they feared not the faces of Tyrants, they ſhrunk not from the moſt cruel torments, and it redounded not a little to the credit of Chriſtianity, when one of *Julians* Nobles preſent at the tormenting of *Marcus* Biſhop of *Arethuſa*, told the *Apoſtate* to his face, We are aſhamed O Emperour, the Chriſtians laugh at your cruelty, and grow more reſolute by it. So *Lactantius* alſo teſtifies of them, our women and children, ſaith he, not to ſpeak of men, overcome their torments, and the fire cannot fetch ſo much as a ſigh from them. If *carnal fear* once get the *aſcendant* over us, all our courage and reſolution will flag, & melt away; we may ſuffer out of unavoidable neceſſity, but ſhall never honour Chriſt and Religion by our ſufferings.

5. *Effect.*

Carnal fear is the very root of Apoſtacy, it hath made thouſands of profeſſors to faint and fall away in the hour of temptation, it is not ſo much from the fury of our enemies without, as from our own fears within, that temptations become victorious over us; from the beginning of fears, Chriſt dates the beginning apoſtacy, *Matth.* 24. 9, 10. *Then ſhall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and ſhall kill you, and ye ſhall be hated of all nations for my name ſake, and then ſhall many be offended.* When troubles and dangers come to an height then fears begin to work at an height too, and then is the critical hour; fears are high, and faith is low; temptat-

ſtrong, and reſiſtance weak. Satan knocks at the door, and fear opens it; and yeelds up the ſoul to him, except ſpecial aid and aſſiſtance come in ſeaſonably from heaven, ſo long as we can profeſs *Religion* without any great hazard of life, liberty, or eſtates, we may ſhew much zeal and forwardneſs in the wayes of godlineſs, but when it comes to the ſharpes, to reſiſting unto blood, few will be found to own and aſſert it openly in the face of ſuch dangers. The firſt retreat is uſually made from a free and open to a cloſe and concealed practiſe of Religion: not opening our windows as *Daniel* did, to ſhew we care not who knows we dare worſhip our God and are not aſhamed of our duties, but hidding our principles and practices with all the art and care imaginable, reckoning it well if we can eſcape danger by letting fall our profeſſion which might expoſs us to it: But if the inquieſt go on, and we cannot be ſecured any longer under this refuge, we muſt comply with falſe worſhip, and give ſome open ſignal that we do ſo, or elſe be marked out for ruine; then ſaith Fear, give a little more ground and retreat to the next ſecurity, which is to comply ſeemingly with that which we do not allow, hoping God will be merciful to us, and accept us if we keep our hearts for him, though we are forced thus to diſſemble and hide our principles. *Eamus ad communem errorem*, ſaid *Calderinus*, when going to the Maſs, let is go to the common error; and as *Seneca* adviſeth about worſhipping the *Roman Gods, in animi religione nos habeat*

habeat, ſed in actibus fingat, let us make a ſemblance and ſhew of worſhipping them, though our hearts give no Religious reſpect to them: But if ſtill the temptation hunt us further, and we come to be more narrowly ſifted, and put to a ſeverer Teſt, by ſubſcribing contrary Articles or renouncing our former avowed principles, and that upon penalty of death, and loſe of all that is dear to us in this world; now nothing in all the world hazards our eternal ſalvation, as our own fears will do; this is like to be the rock on which we ſhall ſplit all, and make an horrible ſhipwrak both of truth and peace: This was the caſe of *Cranmer*, whoſe fears cauſed him to ſubſcribe againſt the dictates of his own conſcience, and cowardly to betray the known truth, and indeed there is no temptation in the world that hath overthrown ſo many as that which hath been backt and edged with fear; the love of Preferments and honours hath ſlain its thouſands, but fear of ſufferings its ten thouſands.

6. *Effect.*

Sinful Fear puts men under great bondage of Spirit, and makes Death a thouſand times more terrible & intolerable than it would otherways be to us, You Read of ſome, *Heb.* 2. 15. *Who through the fear of death were all their life time ſubject to bondage, (i. e.)* It kept them in a miſerable anexity and perplexity of mind, like ſlaves that tremble at the whip which is held over them: Thus many thouſands live under the laſh, ſo terrible is the name of death, eſpecially a violent death, that *they* are not able with patience to

hear it mentioned; which gave the ground of that saying, *Præstat semel, quam semper mori, It's better to die once, than to be dying alwayes.* And surely there is not a more miserable life any poor creature can live, than such a trembling life as this is. For,

1. Such a bondage as this destroys all the comfort and pleasure of life, no pleasure can grow or thrive under the shadow of this cursed Plant; *Nil ei beatum cui semper aliquis terror impendeat,* (*Cicero Tusc. Q.* 15.) saith *Cicero.* All the comforts we possess in this World are imbittered by it. 'Tis storied of *Democles* a flatterer of *Dionysius* the Tyrant, that he told him, *he was the happiest man in the World, having Wealth, Power, Majesty, and abundance of all things*: *Dionysius* sets the Flatterer in all his own pomp at a Table furnished with all fine dainties, and attended upon as a King, but with an heavy sharp sword hanging by a single Horse hair right over his head, this made him quake and tremble so that he could neither eat nor drink but desired to be freed from that estate: The design was to convince him how miserable a life they live who live under the continual terrours of impending death and ruine. It was a sore judgement which God threatned against them in *Jer.* 5. 6. *A Lion out of the forrest shall slay them, and a Wolf of the evening shall spoil them, a Leopard shall watch over their Cities, every one that goeth out thence shal be torn in pieces,* What a miserable life must those people live, who could not stir out of the City, but they presently were seized by

Lyons

Lyons, Wolves and Leopards, that watch'd over them, and lurked in all the Avenews to make them a prey, and yet this is more tolerable than for a mans own fear to watch continually over him.

2. And yet I could wish this were the worst of it, and that our fears destroyed no better comforts than the natural comforts of this life, but alace! they also destroy our spiritual comforts which we might have from Gods promises, and our own and others experiences, which are incomparably the sweetest pleasures men have in this World; But as no creature comfort is pleasant, so no promise relishes like it self to him that lives in this bondage of Fear; when the terrors of death are great, the consolations of the Almighty are small.

In the written word are found all sorts of refreshing strengthening, and heart-reviving promises, prepared by the wisdom and care of God for our relief in the days of darkness and trouble promises of support under the heaviest burdens and pressures, *Isaiah* 41. 10 *Fear not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed, for I am thy God, I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.* A promise able to make the most timorous and trembling soul to shout with the joy of men in harvest, or as they that divide the spoil.

There are found the encouraging promises of defence and protection, *Isai.* 27. 2, 3. and

Iſa. 33. 2. promiſes that lead us into the Almighty power of God, & put us under the wings of his care in time of danger.

Promiſes of moderation and mitigation in the day of ſharp affliction that we may be able to bear it, *Iſa.* 27. 8. 1 *Cor.* 10. 13.

Promiſes of deliverance out of troubles, if the malice of man bring us into trouble, the mercy of God will aſſuredly bring us out. *Pſal.* 91. 14, 15. and *Pſal.* 125. 3.

And which is moſt comfortable of all the reſt, promiſes to Sanctifie and bleſs our troubles to our good, ſo that they ſhall not only ceaſe to be hurtful, but by vertue of the promiſe, become exceeding beneficial to us, *Iſa.* 27. 9. *Rom.* 8. 28.

All theſe promiſes are provided by our tender Father for us againſt a day of ſtraits and fears; and becauſe he knew our weakneſs, and how apt our fears would be to make us ſuſpect our ſecurity by them, he hath for the performance of them, engaged his wiſdom, power, care, faithfulneſs, and unchangeableneſs, 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. *Iſai.* 27. 2, 3. 2 *Chron.* 16, 9. 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *Iſai.* 43. 1, 2. In the midſt of ſuch promiſes ſo ſealed how chearful and magnanimous ſhould we be in the worſt times? And ſay as *David*, *Pſal.* 49. 5. *Why ſhould I fear in the day of evil?* Let thoſe that have no God to flee to, no promiſe to rely upon, let them fear in the day of evil, I have no cauſe to do ſo. But even from theſe moſt comfortable refuges in the promſes, our own fears beat us, we are ſo ſcared that we mind them not, ſo as to draw encouragement, reſolution,

reſolution, and courage from them. Thus the Shields of the mighty are vilely caſt away.

So for all the choice records of the Saints experiences in all former troubles and diſtreſſes; God hath by a ſingular providence, (aiming at our relief in future diſtreſſes,) preſerved them for us; if danger threaten us, we may turn to the recorded experiences his people have left us, of the ſtrange and mighty influence of his providence upon the hearts of their enemies, to ſhew them favour, *Gen.* 31. 29. *Pſ.* 106. 46. *Jer.* 15. 11.

There alſo are found the ancient Rolls and Records of the admirable *methods* of his peoples deliverance, contrived by his infinite and unſearchable wiſdom for them, when all their own thoughts have been at a loſs, and their underſtandings poſed and ſtaggered, *Exod.* 15. 6. 2 *Chron.* 20. 12, 15. 2 *King.* 19. 3, 7.

There are the recorded experiences of Gods unſpotted faithfulneſs, which never failed any ſoul that durſt truſt himſelf in its arms. *Mica.* 6. 4, 5. *Joſh.* 7. 9,

There alſo are to be found the Records of his tender and moſt fatherly care for his children; who have been to him as a peculiar treaſure in times of danger, *Pſal.* 40. 17. *Deut.* 32. 10, 11, 12. *Iſa.* 49. 16. *Job* 36. 7. 2 *Chro.* 16. 9.

All theſe and many more ſupports and cordials are made ready to our hand and provided for a day of trouble; but alas to what purpoſe, if our own fears ſo tranſport us that we can neither apply them, nor ſo much as calmly ponder and conſider them.

3. To conclude, by these fears we are deprived of those manifold advantages we might gain by the calm and composed meditations of our own death, and the change it will make upon us; could we sit down in peace, and miditate in a familiar way upon death; could we look with a composed and well setled mind into our own graves, and not be scared and frighted with the thoughts of death, and startle whenever we take it, (though but in our thoughts) by the cold hand: To what seriousness would those meditations frame us? And what abundance of evils would they prevent in our conversations? the sprinkling of dust upon new writing, prevents many a blot and blur in our books or letters; and could we thus sprinkle the dust of the grave upon our minds, it would prevent many a sin and miscarriage in our words and actions: But there is no profit or advantage redounding to us either from promises, experiences, or death it self when the soul is discomposed and put into confusion by its own fears. And thus you see ome of those many mischievous effects of your wn fears.

CHAP. VI.

Prescribing the rules to cure our sinful Fears, and prevent these sad and woful effects of them.

SECT. I.

WE are now come to the most difficult part of the work, *viz. The cure*, of the sinful and

and ſlaviſh fear of Creatures in times of danger, which if it might through the bleſſing of God be effected, we might live at *hearts eaſe* in the midſt of all our enemies and troubles, and like the Sun in the Heavens, keep on our ſteady courſe in the darkeſt and gloomieſt day: But before I come to the particular Rules, it will be neceſſary for the prevention of miſtakes, to lay down three uſeful cautions about this matter.

1. *Caution.*

Underſtand that none but thoſe that are in Chriſt are capable to improve the following Rules to their advantage. The ſecurity of our ſouls is the great argument uſed by Chriſt to extinguiſh our fears of them that can kill the Body, *Mat.* 10. 28. But if the Soul muſt unavoidably periſh when the Body doth, if it muſt drop into hell before the body be laid in the grave: If he that kills the body doth by the ſame ſtroak cut off the Soul from all the means and poſſibilities of mercy and happineſs for ever; what can be offered in ſuch a caſe, to relieve a man againſt fear and trembling.

2. *Caution.*

Expect not a perfect cure of your fears in this life; whilſt there are enemies and dangers, there will be ſome fears working in the beſt hearts: If our Faith could be perfected, our Fears would be perfectly cured; but whilſt there is ſo much weakneſs in our Faith; there will be too much ſtrength in our Fears.

And for thoſe who are naturally timorous, who have more of this paſſion in their conſtitu-

tion than other men have; and those in whom melancholly is a rooted and chronical disease; it will be hard for them totally to rid themselves of fears and dejections, though in the use of such helps and means as follow, they may be greatly relieved against the tyranny of them, and enabled to possess their souls in much more tranquillity and comfort.

3. *Caution.*

Whosoever expects the benefit of the following Prescriptions and Rules, must not think the Reading or bare remembring them will do the work; but he must work them into his heart by believing and fixed meditation, and live in the the daily practice of them. It is not our opening of our case to a Physician, nor his Prescriptions and written directions that will cure a man, but he must resolve to take the bitter and nauseous potions how much soever he loath it, to abstain from hurtful diet, how well soever he loves it, if ever he expect to be a sound and healthful man. So it is in this case also. These things premised the

1. *Rule.*

The first Rule to relieve us against our Slavish Fears, *Is seriously to consider, and more throughly to study the Covenant of Grace, within the blessed Clasp and Bond whereof all believers are.* I think the clear understanding of the Nature, Extent, and Stability of the Covenant, and of our interest therein, would go a great way in the cure of our sinful and slavish Fears.

A Covenant is more than a naked promise, in

in the Covenant, God hath graciously consulted our weakness, fears, and doubts, and therefore proceeds with us in the highest way of solemnity confirming his promises by Oath, *Heb.* 6. 13, 17. and by Seals, *Rom.* 4. 11. Putting himself under the most solemn ties and engagements that can be, to his people, that from so firm a ratification of the Covenant with us, we might have strong consolation, *Heb.* 6. 18. He hath so ordered it, that it might afford strong supports, & the most reviving cordials to our faint and timorous Spirits, in all the plunges of trouble both from within and from without. In the Covenant God makes over himself to his people, to be unto them a God, *Jer.* 31. 33. *Heb.* 8. 10. Wherein the Lord bestows himself in all his Glorious Essential properties upon us, to the end that whatsoever his Almighty power, Infinite wisdom, and incomprehensible mercy can afford for our protection, support, deliverance, direction, pardon, or refreshment; we might be assured shall be faithfully performed to us in all the straits, fears, and exigencies of our lives. This God expects we should improve by Faith as the most sovereign antidote against all our Fears in this world, *Isaiah* 43. 1, 2. *Thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel; fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine; when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee,* &c. Isaiah 41. 10. *Fear not, for I am with thee, be not dismaied, for I am thy God.*

And

And if thou Reader, be within the bond of this Covenant, thou mayeſt ſurely find enough there to quiet thy heart, whatever the matter or ground of thy fears be: If God be thy Covenant God, he will be with thee in all thy ſtreights wants, and troubles, he will never leave, nor forſake thee, From the Covenant it was that *David* encouraged *himſelf* againſt all his troubles 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. *Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet hath he made with me an everlaſting Covenant, well ordered in all things and ſure; and this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, though he make it not to grow.* He could fetch all reliefs, all comforts, all ſalvations out of it, and why cannot we? He deſired no more for the ſupport of his heart; *this is all my deſire*; and ſure if we underſtood and believed it as he did, we could deſire no more to quiet and comfort our hearts than what this Covenant affords us. For,

1. Are we afraid what our enemies will do? We know we are in the midſt of Potent, Politick, and enraged enemies; we have heard what they have done, and ſee what they are preparing to do again; we tremble to think what bloudy Tragidies are like to be acted over again in the world by their cruel hands: But O what heroick and noble acts of faith ſhould the covenant of thy God enable thee to exert amidſt all theſe fears? If God be thy God, then thou haſt an Almighty God on thy ſide, and that is enough to extinguiſh all theſe Fears, *Pſal.* 118. 6. *The Lord is on my ſide, I will not fear what man*

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can do unto me. Your fears come in the name of man, but your help in the name of the Lord: Let them plot, threaten, yea, and ſmite too; God is a ſhield to all that fear him, and if God be for us, who can be againſt us?

2. Are we afraid what God will do? Fear it not, your God wil do nothing againſt your good think not that he may forget you, it cannot be; ſooner may a tender mother forget her ſucking child, *Iſai.* 49. 15. no, no, *He withdraweth not his eye from the Righteous, Job* 36. 7. His eyes are continually upon all the dangers and wants of your Souls and Bodies, there is not a danger or an enemy ſtirring againſt you, but his eye is upon it. 2 *Chron.* 16. 9.

Are you afraid he will forſake and caſt you off? 'Tis true, your ſins have deſerved he ſhould do ſo, but he hath ſecured you fully againſt that fear in his Covenant, *Jer.* 32. 40. I *will not turn away from them, to do them good.* All your fears of Gods forgetting or forſaking you, ſpring out of your ignorance of the Covenant.

3. Are you afraid what you ſhall do? 'Tis uſual for the people of God to purpoſe difficult caſes to themſelves, and put ſtartling queſtions to their own hearts; and there may be an excellent uſe of them, to rouze them out of ſecurity, put them upon the ſearch and tryal of their conditions and eſtates, and make preparation for the worſt; but Satan uſually improves it to a quite contrary end, to deject, affright, and diſcourage them. O if fiery trials ſhould come, if my liberty and life come once to be toucht

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in earneſt, I fear I ſhall never have ſtrength to go on a ſtept farther in the way of Religion: I am afraid I ſhall faint in the firſt encounter, I ſhall deny the words of the Holy One, make ſhipwrack of Faith and a good Conſcience in the firſt guſt of temptation. I can hear, and pray, and profeſs; but I doubt I cannot burn, or bleed, or lie in a dungeon for Chriſt. If I can ſcarce run with footmen in the land of peace, how do I think to contend with Horſes in the ſwellings of *Jordan*?

But yet all theſe are but groundleſs fears, either forged in thy own miſgiving heart, or ſecretly ſhuffled by Satan into it; for God hath abundantly ſecured thee againſt fear in this very particular, by that moſt ſweet ſupporting and bleſſed promiſe, annexed to the former, in the ſame Text, Jer. 32. 40. *I will put my fear into their hearts, and that they ſhall not depart from me.* Here is another kind of Fear, than that which ſo ſtartles thee, promiſed to be put into thy heart, not a fear to ſhake and undermine thy aſſurance as this doth, but to guard and maintain it. And this is the fear that ſhall be enabled to vanquiſh and expel all thy other fears.

4. Or are you afraid what the Church ſhall do? And what will become of the *Ark* of God? Do you ſee a ſtorm gathering, the winds begin to roar, the waves to ſwell; and are you afraid what will become of that veſſel, the Church, in which you have ſo great an intereſt?

It is an argument of the publickneſs and excel-

lency

lency of thy ſpirit, to be thus touched with the feeling ſenſe of the Churches ſufferings, & dangers. Moſt men ſeek their own things; and not the things that are of Chriſt, *Phil.* 2. 21. But yet it is your ſin ſo to fear as to ſink and faint under a ſpirit of diſpondancy, and diſcouragement, which yet many goodmen (*Ep. ad Mel. anno* 1549) are but too apt to do. I remember an excellent paſſage in a Letter of *Luther's* to *Melancthon* upon this very account. "In private troubles, "ſaith he, I am weaker; and thou art ſtronger, "thou diſpiſeſt thy own life, but feareſt the pub-"lick cauſe; but for the publick I am at reſt, "being aſſured that the cauſe is juſt and true; "yea, that it is Chriſt's and Gods cauſe. I am "well nigh a ſecure ſpectator of things, and e-"ſteem not any thing theſe fierce and threatn-"ing Papiſts. I beſeech thee by Chriſt, neglect "not ſo Divine promiſes and conſolations "where the Scripture ſaith, caſt thy care upon "the Lord, wait upon the Lord, be ſtrong, "and he ſhall comfort thy heart

"And in another *Epiſtle*, I much *Anno* 1530.
"diſlike thoſe anxious cares, which as thou "writeſt do almoſt conſume thee: 'Tis not the "greatneſs of the danger, but the greatneſs of "thy unbelief. *John Hus* and others were "under greater danger than we; and if it be "great, he is great that orders it. Why do "you afflict your ſelf? if the cauſe be bad, "let us renounce it; if it be good, why do we "make him a liar that bids us be ſtill? And if you

were

"were able to do any good, by ſuch unprofita-
"ble cares. I beſeech thee, thou that in other
"things *art valiant*, fight againſt thy *ſelf*, thine
"*own greateſt enemy that puts weapons into* Satans
"*hand.*

You ſee how *good* men may be even overwhel-med with publick fears, but certainly if we did well conſider the *bond of the Covenant that is betwixt, God and his people*, we ſhould be more quiet and compoſed. For by reaſon thereof it is, 1. That God is in the midſt of them, *Pſ.* 46. 1, 2, 3, 4. When any great danger threatned the Reformed Church in its tender beginnings in *Luther's* time, he would ſay, come, let us ſing the 46 *Pſalm* and indeed *it is a lovely ſong for ſuch times, it bears the Title of a ſong upon Alamoth, or a ſong for the hidden ones*, God is with them to cover them under his wings. 2. And it is plain matter of Fact evident to all the world, that no people under the heavens have been ſo long, and ſo *wonderfully* preſerved as the *Church* hath been, It hath over lived many *bloody Maſſacres*, terrible perſecutions, ſubtle and cruel enemies; ſtill God hath preſerved and delivered it, for his promiſes oblige him to it, amongſt which thoſe two are ſignal and eminent ones. *Jer.* 30. 11. *Iſa.* 27. 3. 3. And it is obvious to all that will conſider things, that there are the ſelf ſame motives in God, and the ſelf ſame grounds and reaſons before him, to take care of his Church and people that ever were in him, or did ever lie before him from the beginning of the world. For, (1) The relation is ſtill the ſame: What though *Abraham*, *Iſaac*,

Iſaac, and *Jacob*, thoſe renowned believers be in their Graves, and thoſe that ſucceed be far inferiour to them in Grace and Spiritual excellency; yet ſaith the Church, *Doubtleſs thou art our Father.* There is the ſame tie and bond betwixt the father and the youngeſt, weakeſt child in the family, as the eldeſt and ſtrongeſt. 2. His pity and mercy is ſtill the ſame, for that endures for ever: His bowels yern as tenderly over his people in their preſent, as ever they did in any paſt afflictions or ſtreights. 3. The rage and malice of his and his peoples enemies, is ſtill the ſame, they will reflect as blaſphemouſly and diſhonourably upon God now, ſhould he give up his people, as ever they did. *Moſes* Argument is as good now as ever it was, what will the *Egyptains* ſay? and ſo is *Joſhuah's* too, *What wilt thou do unto thy great name?* O if theſe things were more throughly ſtudied and believed, they would appeaſe many Fears,

2. *Rule.*

Work upon your hearts the conſideration of the many miſchiefs and miſeries men draw upon themſelves and others, both in this world and that to come, by their own ſinful fears.

1. The miſeries and calamities that ſinful fear brings upon men in this world, are unſpeakable; this is it that hath plunged the Conſciences of ſo many poor wretches into ſuch deep diſtreſſes! this it is that hath put them upon the *Rack*, and made them roar like men in Hell, among the damned. Some have been recovered,

and

and others have perished in these deeps of horror and despair. In the year 1550. there was at *Ferrara* in *Italy*, one *Faninus* who by reading good Books was by the grace of God converted to the knowledge of the truth, wherein he found such sweetness, that by constant reading, meditation and prayer, he grew so expert in the Scriptures, that he was able to instruct others; and though he durst not go out of the bound of his calling to preach openly, yet by conference and private exhortations he did good to many. This coming to the knowledge of the *Pop*'s Clients, they apprehended and committed him to Prison: where he renounced the truth, and was thereupon released: But it was not long before the Lord met with him for it: So as falling into horrible torments of Conscience, he was near unto utter despair, nor could he be freed from those terrors, before he had fully resolved to venture his life more faithfully in the service of Christ.

Clerks examp. p. 27.

Dreadful was that voice that *Spira* seemed to hear in his own Conscience, as soon as ever his sinful fears had prevailed upon him to renounce the truth. *Thou wicked wretch, thou hast denyed me, thou hast renounced the Covenant of thine obedience, thou hast broken thy Vow, hence Apostate, bear with thee the sentence of thine eternal damnation.* Presently he falls into a sound, quaking and trembling, and still affirmed to his death, that from that time, he never found

found any eaſe or peace in his mind; but profeſſed that he was captivated under the revenging hand of the Almighty God, and that he continually heard the ſentence of Chriſt, the juſt Judge againſt him, and that he knew he was utterly undone, and could neither hope for grace, or that Chriſt ſhould intercede for him to the Father.

In our dreadful *Marian* days, Sir *John Cheek* who had been Tutor to King *Edward* the Sixth, was caſt into the *Tower*, and kept cloſe Priſoner; and there put to this miſerable choice, either to forego his life, or that which was more precious, his liberty of conſcience, neither could his liberty be procured by his great friends at any lower rate, than to recant his Religion; this he was very unwilling to accept of, till his hard impriſonment, joyned with threats of much worſe in caſe of his refuſal, at laſt wrought ſo upon him whilſt he conſulted with fleſh and blood, as drew from him an *Abrenunciation* of that truth which he had ſo long profeſſed, and ſtill believed. Upon this he was reſtored to his liberty, but never to his comfort; for the ſenſe of his own Apoſtacy, and the daily ſight of the cruel butcheries exerciſed upon others for their conſtant adherence to the truth, made ſuch deep impreſſions upon his broken ſpirit, as brought him to a ſpeedy end of his life, yet not without ſome comfortable hopes at laſt.

Our own Hiſtories abound with multitudes of ſuch doleful examples.

Some have been in ſuch horrour of conſcience, that

that they have chosen strangling rather than life, they have felt that anguish of Conscience that hath put them upon desperate resolutions and attempts against their own lives to rid themselves of it. This was the case of *Peter Moon*, who being driven by his own fears to deny the the truth, presently fell into such horrour of Conscience, that seeing a sword hanging in his Parlor, would have sheathed it in his own bowels. So *Francis Spira*, before mentioned, when he was near his end, saw a knife on the Table, and running to it would have mischieved himself, had not his friends prevented him; thereupon he said, *O that I were above God, for I know that he will have no mercy on me. He lay about eight weeks* (saith the Historian) *in a continual burning, neither desiring, nor receiving any thing but by force, and that without digestion; till he became as an Anatomy, vehemently raging for drink, yet fearful to live long, dreadful of hell, yet coveting death, in a continual torment, yet his own Tormentor; and thus consuming himself with grief and horror, impatience and dispair, like a living man in hell, he represented an extraordinary example of Gods justice and power, and so ended his miserable life.*

Surely it were good to fright our selves by such dreadful examples, out of our sinful fears; is any misery we can fear from the hands of men like this? O Reader, believe it, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God: Hadst thou ever felt the rage and efficacy of a wounded and distressed conscience, as these poor wretches

felt

felt it, no fears or threats of men ſhould drive thee into ſuch an hell upon earth as this is.

2. And yet though this be a doleful caſe, it is not the worſt caſe your own ſinful fears will caſt you into, except the Lord overcome and extinguiſh them in you by the fear of his name, they will not only bring you into a kind of hell upon earth, but into hell it ſelf for evermore: For ſo the Righteous God hath ſaid in his word of truth, *Rev.* 21. 8. *But the fearful and unbelieving,* &c. *ſhall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone, which is the ſecond death.* Behold here the Marſhal Law of Heaven, executed upon Cowards and Renegadoes, whoſe fears make them revolt from Chriſt in the time of danger. Think upon this you timorous and faint hearted profeſſors; you cannot bear the thoughts of lying in a neſty Dungeon, how will you lie then in the lake of fire and brimſtone: You are afraied of the face and frowns of a man that ſhall die, but how will you live among devils? *Is* the *wrath of man,* like the *fury of God* poured out? Is not the *little finger of God* heavier than the loyns of all the *Tyrants in the World*? Remember what Chriſt hath ſaid, *Matth.* 10. 33. *But whoſoever ſhal deny me before men, him will I alſo deny before my father which is in heaven.* Reader, The time is coming when he that ſpake theſe words ſhall break out of Heaven with a ſhout, accompanied with myriads of Angels, and ten thouſands of his Saints, the Heavens and the Earth ſhall be in dreadful conflagrations round about him: The laſt Trump

Trump shall sound, the Graves shall open, the Earth and Sea shall give up the dead that are in them. Thine eyes shall see him ascend the awful throne of judgement, his faithful Ones that feared not to own and appear for him in the face of all enemies and dangers, sitting on the bench as Assessors with him; and then to be disclaimed and renounced for ever by Jesus Christ in the face of that great assembly, and proclaimed a delinquent, a Traitor to him, that denied his name, and truths, because of the frowns of a fellow creature long since withered as the grass: O how wilt thou be able to endure this! now put both these together in thy serious consideration, think on the terrours of Conscience here, and the desperate horror of it in Hell; this as a perboiling, that as a roasting in the flames of Gods insufferable wrath: These as some scalding drops sprinkled before hand upon thy Conscience, that tender & sensible part of man; that as the lake burning for ever with fire & brimstone. O who would suffer himself to be driven into all this misery, by the fears of those sufferings which can but touch the flesh, and for their duration, they are but for a moment.

Think, and think again upon those words of Christ, *Mark* 8. 35. *He that will save his life shall lose it.* It may be a prolonging of a miserable life, a life worse than death, even in thine own account; a life without the comfort or joy of life, a life ending in the second death, and all this for fear of a trifle compared with what thou shalt afterwards feel in thine own Conscience, and

and less than a trifle, nothing compared with what thou must suffer from God for ever.

3. *Rule.*

He that will overcome his fears of sufferings, must foresee and provide before hand for them.

The fear of *Caution*, is a good cure to the fear of Distraction, the more of that, the less of this; this fear will cure that, as one fire draws forth another, *Heb.* 11.7. *Noah being moved with fear, prepared an Ark.* In which he provided as much for the rest and quiet of his mind, as he did for the safety of his person and family. That which makes evils so frightful as they are, is their coming by way of surprize upon us. Those troubles that find us secure, do leave us distracted and desperate. Presumption of continued tranquillity, proves one of the greatest aggravations of misery. Troubles will lie heavy enough when it comes by way of expectation, but it is intolerable when it comes quite contrary to expectation. It will be the Lot of *Babylon* to suffer the unexpected Vials of Gods wrath, and I wish none but she and her children may be so surprized, *Rev.* 18.7. O it were well for us, if in the midst of our pleasant enjoyments we would be putting the difficultest cases to our selves, and mingle a few such thoughts as these with all our earthly enjoyments and comforts.

I am now at ease in the midst of my habitation, but the time may be at hand, when my habitation shal be in a prison, I see no faces at *present* but those of *friends*, full of smiles and honours, I may see none shortly but the faces of enemies

full

full of frowns and terrors. I have now an estate to supply my wants, and provide for my family, but this may shortly fall as a prey to the enemy, they may sweep away all that I have gathered, reap the fruits of all my labours,—— *Impius hæc segetes.* I have yet my life given me for a prey; but O how soon may it fall into cruel and blood-thirsty hands? I have no better security for these things than the *Martyrs* had who suffered the loss of all these things for Christs sake; a double advantage would result to us from such meditations as these, *viz.* The Advantage,

1. Of Acquaintance with } Troubles.
2. Of Preparation for }

1. Hereby our thoughts would be better acquainted with these evils, and the more they are acquainted, the less they will start and fright at them: We should not think it strange concerning the fiery trial, as it is 1 *Pet.* 4. 12. It is with our thoughts, as it is with young colts, and so they start at every new thing they meet, but we cure them of it, by bringing them home to that they start at, and making them smell to it; better acquaintance cures this startling humour at them. The newness of evil, saith a late grave and Learned Divine, is the cause Dr. *Edw.* of fear, when the mind it self had Reynolds. had no preceding encounter with it, whereby to judge of its strength nor example of another mans prosperous issue

to

to confirm its hopes in the like ſucceſs: For, as I noted before out of the *Philoſophers* experience is inſtead of armor, and is a kind of fortitude, enabling both to judge, and to bear troubles; for there are ſome things which are *mormolykphia ki proſopphia*, ſcarecrows and vizors which children fear, only out of ignorance; aſſoon as they are known they ceaſe to be terrible. *Epictet.*

I know our minds naturally reluctate, and decline ſuch harſh and unpleaſant ſubjects: 'Tis hard to bring our thoughts to them in good earneſt, and harder to dwell ſo long as is neceſſary to this end upon them. we had rather take a pleaſant proſpect of future felicity and proſperity in this world; of multiplying our days as the ſand, and at laſt dying quietly in our Neſt, as *Job* ſpeaks. Our thoughts run nimbly upon ſuch pleaſant fancies like oyled wheels, and have need of trigging, but when they come into the deep and dirty wayes of ſuffering, there they drive heavilie like *Pharoahs* Chariots, diſmounted from their wheels. But that which is moſt pleaſant, is not alwayes moſt uſefull and neceſſary; Our Lord was well acquainted with griefs, though our thoughts be ſuch great ſtrangers to them, he often thought and ſpake of his ſufferings, and of the bloody Baptiſm, with which he was to be baptized, *Luke* 12. 50. and he not only minded his own ſufferings before hand, but when he perceived the fond imaginations, and vain fancies of ſome that followed and profeſſed him, deluding them with expectations of earthly

prosperity and rest; he gave their thoughts a turn to this less pleasing, but more needful subject, the things they were to suffer for his name; instead of answering a foolish and groundless question, of sitting on his Right and Left hand, like earthly *Grandees*, he rebukes the folly of the *Questionist*, and asks a less pleasing question, *Mat.* 20. 22. *But Jesus answered and said, ye know not what ye ask, are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? And to be baptized with baptism that I shall be baptized with? q. d.* You do but abuse your selves with such fond and idle dreams, there is other imployments cut out for you in the purpose of God; In stead of sitting upon Thrones and Tribunals, it would become you to think of being brought before them as Prisoners to receive your doom and sentence to die for my sake; these thoughts would do you a great deel more service.

2. As such meditations would acquaint us better, so they would prepare us better to encounter troubles and difficult things when they come. Readiness and preparation would subdue and banish our fears; we are never much scared with that for which our minds are prepared. There is the same difference in this case, as there is betwixt a Souldier in compleat Armour, and ready at every point for his enemy; and one that is allarm'd in his bed, who hath laid his cloaths in one place, and his Arms in another, when his enemy is breaking open his chamber door upon him. It was not therefore without the most weighty reason, that the Apostle presses us

us ſo earneſtly, *Eph.* 6. 13, 14 *Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withſtand in the evil day, and having done all to ſtand. Stand therefore having your loyns girt about with truth, and having one the breaſt-plate of Righteouſneſs, and your feet ſhod with the preparation of the Goſpel of peace.* We ſee the benefit of ſuch previſions and proviſions for ſufferings in that great example of courage and conſtancy, *Acts* 21. 13. I *am ready*, (ſaith *Paul*) *not only to be bound, but to die at Jeruſalem.* And the ſame courage and conſtancy remained in him, when he was entering the very Liſts, and going to lay his very neck upon the block, 2 *Tim.* 4. 6, *I am ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand.* The word *opendomai* properly ſignifies a *libation* or drink-offering, wherein ſome conceive he alluded to the very kind of his own death, *viz.* by the Sword: His heart was brought to that frame, that he could with as much willingneſs pour out his blood for Chriſt, as the Prieſts uſed to pour out the drink-offering to the Lord. 'Tis true, all the meditations and preparations in the world made by us, are not ſufficient in themſelves to carry us through ſuch difficult ſervices, 'tis one thing to ſee death as our fancy limnes it out at a diſtance and another thing to look death it ſelf in the face. We can behold the painted Lyon without fear, but the living Lyon, makes us tremble; but yet though our ſuffering-ſtrength comes not from our own preparations or fore-thoughts of Death; but from GOD'S gracious aſſiſt-

ance, yet usually that assistance of his is communicated to us, in and by the conscionable and humble use of these means; let us therefore be found waiting upon God for strength, patience, and resolutions to suffer as it becomes Christians, in the daily serious use of those means whereby he is pleased to communicate to his people.

4. *Rule.*

If ever you will subdue your own slavish fears, Commit your selves, and all that is yours into the hands of God by Faith.

This Rule is fully confirmed by that Scripture Prov. 16. 3. *Commit thy works unto the* Lord, *and thy thoughts shall be established.* The greatest part of our trouble and burden in times of danger, arises from the unsetledness and distraction of our own thoughts, and the way to calm and queit our thoughts is to commit all to God. This Rule is to be applied for this end and purpose when we are going to meet Death it self, and that in all its terrible formalities, and most frightful appearance, *Pet.* 4, 19. *Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.* And if this committing act of Faith be so useful at such a time, when the thoughts must be supposed to be in the greatest hurry, and fears in their full strength; much more will it establish the heart, and calm its passions in lesser troubles; you know what ease and relief it would be to you, if you had a Tryal depending in Law for your Estate

Eſtates, and your hearts were overloaded and diſtracted with cares and fears about the iſſue of it: *If* one whom you know to be very skilful and faithful, and ſhould ſay to you at ſuch a time, trouble not your ſelf any further about this buſineſs, never break an hours ſleep more for this matter; be you as an unconcerned Spectator, commit it to me, and truſt me with the management of it; I will make it my own concernment, and ſave you harmleſs. O what a burden, what an heavy load would you feel your ſelves eaſed of, aſſoon as you had this transferred, and committed it to ſuch a hand! then you would be able to eat with pleaſure, and ſleep in quietneſs: Much more eaſe and quietneſs doth your committing the matter of your fears to God, give even ſo much more, as his power, wiſdom, and faithfulneſs is greater than what is to be found in men. But to make this Rule practicable, and improveable to peace, and quietneſs of heart in an evill day, it will be neceſſary that you well underſtand,

1. What the committing act of Faith is.
2. What grounds and encouragements Believers have for it.

1. Study well the nature of this committing act of Faith, and what it ſuppoſes or implyes in it, for all men cannot commit themſelves to God, 'tis his own people only that can do it; nor is it every thing they can commit to God, they cannot commit themſeles to his care and prote-

ction in any way, but only in his own wayes. Know more particularly,

1. That he who will commit himſelf to God, muſt commit himſelf to him in wel doing, as the *Apoſtle* limits it in 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. and in things agreeable to his will; elſe we would make God a patron and protector of our ſins, *Let them that ſuffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well doing.* We cannot commit our ſins, but our duties to Gods protection, God is ſo great a friend to truth and righteouſneſs, that in ſuch a caſe he will not take your part, how dear ſoever you be to him, if truth be found on your enemies part, and the miſtake on yours. Think not to entitle God to your errors or failings, much leſs to any ſinful deſignes: You may commit a doubtful caſe to him to be decided, but not a ſinful caſe to be protected. It is in vain to ſhelter any cauſe of your own under his wings, except you can write upon it as *David* did, *Pſal.* 74. 22. *Thine own cauſe, O Lord, thine own as well as mine,* Lord plead thine own cauſe.

2. He that commits his *all* to God, ſuppoſes and firmly believes that all events and iſſues of things are in Gods hands; that he only can direct, over-rule, and order them all as he pleaſeth. Upon this ſuppoſition, the committing acts of Faith in all our fears and diſtreſſes are built, *I truſted in thee, O Lord, I ſaid, thou art my God, my times are in thy hand, deliver me from the hands of my enemies, and from them that perſecute me.* His firm aſſent to this great truth, that his

his times were in Gods hands, was the reaſon why he committed himſelf into that hand. If our times, our lives, or comforts were in our enemys hands; it were to little purpoſe for us to commit our ſelves into Gods hands. And here the contrary ſenſes and methods of Faith and unbelief, are as conſpecious as in any one thing whatſoever: Unbelief perſwades men that their lives and all that is dear to them, is in the hands of their enemies, and therefore perſwades them the beſt way they can take to ſecure themſelves, is by complyance with the will of their enemies, and pleaſing them. But Faith determines quite contrary, it tells us we and all that is ours is in Gods hand, and no enemy can touch us or ours till he give them a permiſſion; and therefore it is our duty and intereſt to pleaſe him, & commit all to him.

3. The committing of our ſelves to God implies the reſignation of our wills to the will of God, to be diſpoſed of as ſeems good in his eyes: So *David* commits to God the event of that ſad and doubtful providence which made him flie for his life from a ſtrong conſpiracy, 2 *Sam.* 15. 25. *And the King ſaid unto* Zadock, *Carry back the Ark of GOD into the City; if I ſhall find favour in the eyes of the LORD; he will bring me again, and ſhew me both it and his habitation, but if he thus ſay, I have no delight in thee; behold here am I, let him do to me as ſeemeth good to him:* *q. d.* LORD, the conſpiracy againſt my life is ſtrong, the danger great, the iſſue exceeding doubtful: but I commit it all into thy hand, if *David* may yet be uſed in any further ſervice

for his God; I ſhall ſee this City and thy lovely *Temple* again, but if not, I lie at thy foot to be diſpoſed either for life or death, for the earthly or the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, as ſeemeth beſt in thine eyes: This ſubmiſſion to divine pleaſure is included in the committing act of Faith. Chriſtian, what ſayeſt thou to it? Is thy will content to go back, that the will of God may come on, and take place of it? It may be thou canſt refer a difficult caſe to God, provided that he will determine and iſſue it according to thy deſires, but in truth that is no ſubmiſſion or reſignation at all, but a ſinful limiting of and preſcribing to God. It was an excellent reply that a choice Chriſtian once made to another; when a beloved and only Child lay in a dangerous ſickneſs at the point of death; a friend asked the mother what would you now deſire of God in reference to your Child? Would you beg of him its life or death, in this extremity it is now in? The mother anſwered, I refer that to the will of God. But ſaid her friend, if God would refer it to you, what would you chuſe then? Why truly ſaid ſhe, if God would refer it to me. I would even refer it to God again.

This is the true committing of our ſelves, and our troubleſome concerns to the Lord.

4. The committing act of Faith, implies our renouncing and diſclaiming all confidence and truſt in the arm of fleſh, and an expectation of relief from God only: If we commit our ſelves to God, we muſt ceaſe from man, *Iſa.* 2. 22. To truſt God in part, and the Creature in

in part, is to set one foot upon a Rock, and the other in a quick-sand: Those acts of Faith that give the intire glory to God, give real relief and comfort to us.

2. Let us see what grounds and encouragements the people of God have to commit themselves and all the matters of their fear to God, and so enjoy the peace and comfort of a resigned will; and there are two sorts of encouragements before you, let the case be as difficult and frightful as it will; you may find sufficient encouragements in God, and somewhat from your selves, *viz.* your relation to him, and experiences of him.

1. In God there is all that your hearts can desire to encourage you to trust him over all, and commit all into his hands. For,

1. He is able to help and relieve you, let the case be never so bad, yet *let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is plenteous redemption*, Ps. 130.7,8. Plenteous Redemption, (*i. e.*) all the stores of power, choice of methods, plenty of means, abundance of wayes to save his people, when they can see no way out of their troubles: Therefore hope *Israel* in *Jehovah*.

2. As his Power is Almighty, so his Wisdom is Infinite and unsearchable, *He is a God of judgement, blessed are all they that wait for him*, *Isaiah* 30. 18. When the Apostle *Peter* had related the wonderful preservations of *Noah* in the Deluge, and of *Lot* in *Sodom*; one in a general destruction of the world by water, and the other in the overthrow of these Cities by fire, He concludes,

and

and ſo ſhould we, *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation*, 2 Pet. 2. 9. Some men have much power, but little wiſdom to manage it, others are wiſe and prudent, but want ability; in God there is an infinite fulneſs of both.

3. His love to and tenderneſs over his people is tranſcendent, and unparallelled; and this ſets his wiſdom and power both a work for their good, hence it is that his eyes of providence run continually throughout the whole earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in the behalf of them whoſe hearts are perfect (*i. e.*) upright towards him, 2 *Chron.* 16. 9. Thus you ſee how he is every way fitted as a proper object of your truſt.

2. Conſider your ſelves and you ſhal find encouragements to commit all to God. For,

1. You are his children, and to whom ſhould children commit themſelves in dangers and fears but to their own father? *Doubtleſs thou art our father*, ſaith the diſtreſſed Church, *Iſai.* 63. 15, 16. Yea, Chriſtian, *Thy maker is thy husband*, *Iſaiah* 54. 5. Is not that a ſufficient ground to caſt thy ſelf upon him? What, a Child not truſt its own Father? A wife not commit her ſelf to her own husband?

2. You have truſted him with a far greater concern already than your eſtates, liberties, or lives; you have committed your ſouls to him, and your eternal intereſts, 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. Shall we commit the Jewel, and diſpute the Cabinet? Truſt him for heaven, and doubt him for earth?

3. You have ever found him faithful in all that

that you truſted him with, all your experiences are ſo many good grounds of confidence, *Pſal.* 9. 10. Well then, reſolve to truſt God over all, and quietly leave the diſpoſe of every thing to him: he hath been with you in all former ſtreights wants, and fears, hitherto he hath helped you, and cannot he do ſo again, except you tell him how? O truſt in his wiſdom, power, and love, and lean not to your own underſtandings. The fruit of reſignation will be peace.

5. *Rule.*

If ever you well get rid of your fears and diſtractions, get your affections mortified to the world, and to the inordinate and immoderate love of every enjoyment in the world.

The more you are mortified, the leſs you will be terrified; 'tis not the dead, but the living world, that puts our hearts into ſuch fears and tremblings: If our hearts were once crucified, they would ſoon be quieted. 'Tis the ſtrength of our *affections* that puts ſo much ſtrength into our *afflictions*. It was not therefore without great reaſon that the Apoſtle compares the life of a Chriſtian to the life of a Souldier, who if he mean to follow the Camp, and acquit himſelf bravely in fight, muſt not *intangle himſelf with the affairs of this life*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 4. Sure there is no following Chriſt's Camp, but with a diſintangled heart from the world, for proportionable to the *heat of our love* will be the ſtrength and height of our fears about theſe things; more particularly, if ever you will rid your ſelves of your uncomfortable and uncomely fears,

fears, use all Gods means to mortifie your affections to the exhorbitant esteem and love of,

1. Your Estates.
2. Your Liberty.
3. Your Lives.

1. Get mortified and cooled hearts to your possessions and Estates in the world. The pooreſt age afforded the richeſt Christians, and nobleſt Martyrs. Ships deepeſt laden are not beſt for encounters. The believing Hebrews *took joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods, knowing in themſelves that they had in heaven a better and induring ſubſtance, Heb.* 10. 34. they carried it rather like unconcerned *Spectators*, then they true *Proprietors*: They rejoyced when rude Souldiers carried out their goods, as if ſo many friends had been bringing them in: And whence was this? But from an heart fixed upon heaven, and mortified to things on Earth. Doubtleſs they eſteemed and valued their Eſtates as the good providence of God, for their more comfortable accommodation in this world; but it ſeems they did, and O that we could look upon them as mercies of the loweſt and meaneſt rank and nature. The ſubſtance laid up in Heaven was a better ſubſtance, and as long as that was ſafe, the loſs of this did not afflict them.

They could bleſs God for theſe things which for a little time did miniſter refreſhment to them, but they knew them to be tranſitory enjoyments things that would make to themſelves wings and flee away, if their enemies had not toucht them; but the ſubſtance laid up for them in Heaven, that

that was an *enduring ſubſtance*: So far as thoſe earthly things might further them towards heavenly things, ſo far they prized and valued them, but if Satan would turn them into ſnares and temptations to deprive them of their better ſubſtance in heaven, they could eaſily ſlight them and take the ſpoiling of them joyfully. In a ſtreſs of weather when the Ship is ready to ſink and founder in a ſtorm, all hands are readily imployed to throw the richeſt goods overboard. No man ſaith it's pity to caſt them away, but reaſon dictates to a man in that caſe, better theſe periſh, than I periſh with and for them. Theſe be the wares that ſome will not caſt overboard, and therefore they are ſaid to drown men in perdition, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. *Demas* would rather periſh than part with theſe things. 2 *Tim.* 4. 10. But Reader, conſider ſeriouſly what comfort they can yeeld thee, when thou muſt look upon them as the price for which thou haſt ſold Heaven, and all the hopes of glory; even as much as the price of blood yeelded *Judas*: and ſo they will enſnare thee if thy unmortified heart be overheated with the love of them as his was.

2. Be mortified to your liberty, and take heed of placing too great an eſteem upon it, or neceſſity in it. Liberty is a deſirable thing to the very birds of the air, accommodate them the beſt you can in your cages, feed them with the richeſt fare, they had rather be cold and hungry with their liberty in the woods, than fat and warm in your houſes. But yet as ſweet as it is, there may be

be more ſweetneſs and comfort in parting with it, that in keeping it, as the caſe may ſtand. The doors of a priſon can lock you in, but they cannot lock the comforter out. *Paul* and *Silas* loſt their liberty for Chriſt, but not their comfort with it? they never were ſo truly at liberty as when their feet were made faſt in the ſtocks? they never fared ſo deliciouſly, as when they fed upon priſoners fare. God ſpread a Table for them in the priſon, ſent them in a rich feaſt, yea and they had muſick at their feaſt too, and that at midnight, *Acts* 16. 25.

Rev. 1. 9, 10. *Patmos* was a barren Iſland, and a Place deſigned for baniſhed perſons; it lay in the *Ægean Sea*, not far from the coaſt of the Leſſer *Aſia*: it was inhabited by none becauſe of the exceeding barrenneſs of it, but ſuch who were appointed to it for their puniſhment? ſo that here *John* could meet with no more earthly refreſhment, than what the barren rocks, or wild and deſperate perſons condemned to live upon it, could afford: Ay, but there, it was that Chriſt appeared to him in unexpreſſible glory? there it was that he had thoſe reviſhing viſions, and ſaw the whole Scheme of providence in the Government of this world. there he ſaw the *New Jeruſalem* coming down from God out of heaven, as a bride prepared for her husband? This made a *Patmos* become a *Paradice*: never did any place afford him ſuch comfort as this did, So that Chriſtians may not think there is ſo ſtrict and neceſſary a connection betwixt Liberty and Comfort, that he

that

that takes away the firſt, muſt needs deprive them of the other.

Again, Suppoſe we ſhould be ſo fond of our Liberty as to exchange truth and a good Conſcience for it; cannot God ſo imbitter it to you, yea, hath he not ſo imbittered it to many, that they were quickly weary of it, and glad of an opportunity to exchange it for a priſon. Our own *Martyrology* furniſhes us with many ſad examples of it: O what will you do with your bitter dear bought Liberty, when peace is taken away from the inner man? When God ſhall clap up your ſouls in priſon, and put your Conſciences into his bonds and fetters? then you will ſay as the Martyr did, I *am in priſon, till I be in Priſon.*

3. Be mortified to the inordinate and fond love of life, as ever you expect relief againſt the fears of death. Reaſon thy ſelf into a lower value of thy life: Methinks you have arguments enough to cure your fondneſs in this point: Have you found it ſuch a pleaſant life to you, for ſo much of it as is paſt; You know how the Apoſtle repreſents it, 2 *Cor.* 5. 4. *We that are in this Tabernacle do groan being burthened.* And is a burthened and a groaning life ſo deſirable? You know alſo as he ſpeaks in in the next verſe, that whilſt you are at home in the body, you are abſent from the Lord; and is a ſtate of abſence from Jeſus Chriſt ſo deſirable to a ſoul that loves him; Can you find much pleaſure ſo far from home; You may fancy what you will, but upon ſerious recollection you will be

able to tell your ſelves, that till you be dead you will never be out of the reach of Satans temptations, never freed from your own indwelling corruptions, theſe conflicts cannot have an end till life be ended. You alſo ſtand convinced that till you be dead, your Souls cannot be ſatisfied, nor your deſires be at reſt, have what comforts ſoever from God in the way of Faith, and courſe of duties your hearts are ſtill of the center, and will ſtill gravitate and gaſp Heaven-ward. You alſo know that die you muſt, and the time of your departure is at hand, and of all deaths, if you might have your choice, none is more honourable to God, or like to be ſo evidential and comfortable to you as a violent death for Chriſt; therein you come to him by conſent and choice, not by neceſſity and conſtraint, therein you give a publick teſtimony for Chriſt, which is the higheſt uſe that ever our bloud can be put to, or honoured by; and for the pain and torment, as the Martyr ſaid, *He that takes away from my torment, takes away from my reward.* But even in that point, God can make it eaſier to you than a natural death would be; he will be with you in your extremity, and adminiſter ſuch reviving cordials as other men muſt not look to taſte, at leaſt not ordinarly; they being prepared and reſerved for ſuch, againſt ſuch an hour.

O then, work out the inordinate love of life by working in ſuch mortifying conſiderations upon your own hearts, and if once you gain but this point, you will quickly find all your pains

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and prayers richly answered in the ease and rest of your hearts, in the most scaring and frightful times.

6. *Rule.*

Eye the encouraging examples of those that have trod the path of sufferings before you, and strive to imitate such worthy Patrons.

Behold the cloud of witnesses encompassing you round about; and a cloud like that over the *Israelites* to direct you: yea, a cloud for multitude of excellent persons to animate and encourage you, *Heb.* 12. 1. *O take them for an example in suffering affliction, and patience. James* 5. 10. Examples of excellent persons that have broken the ice, and beaten the path before us, are of excellent use to suppress our fears, and rouse our courage in our own encounters.

The first sufferers had the hardest task, they that first entred the lists for Christ, wanted those helps to suppress fear which they have left unto us. Strange and untried torments are most terrible, for *magnitudinem rerum consuetudo subducit*, trial and acquaintance abates the formidable greatness of evils, they knew not the strength of that enemy they were to engage, but we fight with an enemy that hath been often beaten and triumph'd over by our *brethren* that went before us: Certainly we that live in the last times, have the best helps that ever any had to subdue their fears; we have heard of the courage and constancy of our brethren, in as sharp trials

of

of their courage as ever we can be called to: we have read with what Christian gallantry they have triumphed over all sorts of sufferings and torments, how they have been strengthned with all might in the inner man unto all patience, and long suffering, with joyfulness, 1 *Col.* 11. How they have gone away from the Courts that censured and punished them, rejoycing that they were honoured to be dishonoured for Christ, as the strict reading of that Text is, *Acts* 5.41. counting the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of *Egypt*, *Heb.* 11. 26. which at that time was the Magazine of the world for Riches: You read what *Trials they have had of cruel mockings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonments, how they were stoned sawn asunder, tempted, slain with the sword, wandred about in Sheeps skins, and Goat skins, destitute, afflicted, tormented, Heb.* 11. 36, 37. In all which they obtained a good report, they came out of the field with triumphant faith and patience; and this was not the effect of an over-heated zeal at the first outset, but the same spirit of courage was found among Christians in after ages, who have put off their persecutors with a kind of pleasant scorn and contempt of Torments.

oiikaizioleſtan atimaithenai.

So did *Basil*, truly sirnamed the great, when *Valens* the Emperour in a great rage threatned him with banishment, and tortures, as to the first, said he, I little regard it, for the earth is the LORDS, and the fulness thereof: and

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as for tortures what can they do upon such a poor thin body as mine, nothing but skin and bone? And at another time when *Eusebius* Governour of *Pontus* told him in a great rage, he would tear his very liver out of his bowels: Truly said *Basil* you shall do me a very good turn in it, to take out my naughty liver; which inflames and diseaseth my whole body. Their enemies have professed the Christians put them to shame, by smiling at their cruelties and threatnings. *Ignatius* his love to Christ had so perfectly overcome all fears of sufferings, that when he was going to be thrown for a prey among the Lions and Leopards, he professed he longed to be among them, and said he, if they will not dispatch me the sooner, I will provoke them, that I may be with my sweet Jesus. And if we come down to later ages, we shal find as stout Champions for Christ, The courage and undauntedness of *Luther* is trumpeted abroad throughout the Christian world, it would swell this small *Tract* too much, but to note the most eminent instances of his courage for Christ: The last he gave was by his sorrow in his last sickness, that he must carry his blood to the Grave. The like Heroick Spirit appeared in diverse Persons of honour and eminency, who zealously espoused the same cause of *reformation* with him. Remarkable to this purpose is that famous Epistle wirtten by *Ulricus ab Hutten*, a *German* Knight, in defence of *Luther's* cause against the Cardinals and Bishops

Socrat. Hist. l. 4. c. 26. Theod. l. 4. cap. 19.

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assembled at *Wormes*. "I will go through (said "he) with what *I* have undertaken against "you, and, will stir up men to seek their "freedom: *S*uch as yeeld not to me at first, I "will overcome with importunity; I neither "care nor fear what may befal me, being pre- "pared for either event; either to ruine you, "to the great benefit of my Countrey, or my "self to fall with a good Conscience: therefore "that you may see with what confidence I con- "temn your threats; I do profess my self to be "your irreconcilable enemy, whilst ye perse- "cute *Luther* and such as he is. No power of "yours, no injury of fortune shall alter this mind "in me; though you take away my life, yet this "well deserving of mine towards my countries "liberty shall not die. I know that my endea- "vour to remove such as you are, and to place "worthy Ministers in your room, is acceptible "to God; and in the last judgement, I trust it "will be safer for me to have offended you, "than to have had your favour.

It was also a brave Heroick Spirit by which *John* Duke of *Saxony* was acted to defend the Reformation, who despising all the favours and offers of the Court, and of *Rome*, and the terrors of Death it self; appeared as my Author speaks in its behalf against all the Devils, and the *Pope*, in three publick Imperial Assemblies, saying openly to their faces, I must serve GOD, or the world; and which of these two do ye think is the better? And assoon as

Spangenberg. ad An. 1531.

as *Luther's* Sermons were forbidden, he hasted away, saying, I will not stay there where I cannot have my liberty to serve God.

And now Reader, thou hast a little taste of the courage and zeal of those worthies who are gone before thee in defence of that cause for which thou feareſt to suffer. Most men, saith *Chrisostom*, that read or hear such examples, are like the Spectators of the *Roman Gladiators*, who stood by and praised their courage, but durst not enter the Lists to undertake what they did. If ever thou wilt get the like courage for Christ, thus improve such famous examples.

1. Make use of them to obviate the prejudice of singularity; you see you have store of good company, the same things you are like to suffer for Christ, have been accomplished in the rest of your brethren in the world, 1 *Pet.* 5. 9.

2. Improve them against the prejudice of all that shame that attends sufferings, here you may see the most excellent persons in the world reckoning it their glory to suffer the vilest things for Jesus Christ, *Acts* 5. 41. *Heb.* 11. 26.

3. Improve them against the conceit of the insupportableness of sufferings. Lo here, poor weak creatures which have been carried honourably and comfortably through the cruellest and difficultest sufferings for Christ. Our Women and Children, not to speak of men (said *Tertullian*) overcome their Tormentors, and the fire cannot fetch so much as a sigh from them.

4. Improve them against thine own unbelief, and staggerings at the faithfulness of God in that

that promise, *Isa.* 43. 2. *When thou passest through the fire I will be with thee, &c.* Lo here you have the recorded and faithful testimonies of such as have tried it, with one voice witnessing for God, *Thy word is truth, thy word is truth.*

5. Improve them against the sensible weakness of your own grace, are you afraid your faith love, and patience are too weak to carry you through great trials? Why, doubtless so were many of them too, they were men of like fears, troubled with a bad heart, and a busie devil as well as you, they also had their clouds & damps as you have; yet the Almighty power of God supported them; and out of weakness they were made strong: Despond not therefore but get a judgment satisfied, *Psal.* 44. 22. A Conscience sprinkled, 2 *Rom.* 1. 7. And a Call cleared, *Dan.* 6. 10. Exercise Faith also with respect to Divine assistances, and everlasting rewards as they did; and doubt not but the same God that enabled them to finish their course with joy, will be as good to you as he was to them. Consider, Christ hath done as much for you as he did for any of them, and deserves as much from you as from any of them; and hath prepared the same glory for you, that he prepared for them: O that such considerations might provoke you to shew as much courage and love to Christ, as any of them ever did.

7. *Rule.*

If ever you will get above the power of your own fears in a suffering day, make haste to clear your interest in Christ, and your pardon in his blood before that evil day come.

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The clearer this is, the bolder you will be? an aſſured Chriſtian was never known to be a coward in ſufferings: It is impoſſible to be clear of fears, till you are cleared of the doubts about intereſt in, aud pardon by Chriſt. Nothing is found more ſtrengthening to our fears, than that which clouds our evidences? and nothing more to quiet and cure our fears, than that which clears our evidences. The ſhedding abroad of Gods love in our hearts, will quickly fill them with a ſpirit of glorying in tribulations, *Rom.* 5. 5. When the believing *Hebrews* once came to know in themſelves that they had an enduriug ſubſtance in heaven, they quickly found in themſelves an unconcerned heart for the loſs of their comforts on earth, *Heb.* 10. 34. and ſo ſhould we too. For,

1. Aſſurance ſatisfies a man that his treaſure and true happineſs is ſecured to him, and laid out of the reach of all his enemies; and ſo long as that is ſafe, he hath all the reaſon in the world to be quiet and chearful, I *know* (ſaith *Paul*) *whom* I *have believed, and am perſwaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him againſt that day*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. And he gives this as the reaſon why he was not aſhamed of Chriſts ſufferings.

2. The aſſured Chriſtian knows that if death it ſelf come, (which is the worſt men can inflict) he ſhall be no loſer by the exchange; nay he ſhall make the beſt bargain that ever he made ſince he firſt parted with all in his afflictions, to follow Chriſt. There are two rich bargains

gains a Christian makes; one is when he exchanges the world for Christ in his first choice at his conversion, in point of love and estimation: the other is when he actually parts with the world for Christ at his dissolution: both these are rich bargains, and upon this ground it was the Apostle said, *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain*, *Phil.* 1. 21. The death of a believer in Christ, is gain unspeakable, but if a man would make the utmost gain by dying he shall find it in dying for Christ, as well as in Christ: And to shew you wherein the gain of such a death lies, let a few particulars be weighed, wherein the gain will be cast up in both; he that is assured he dies in Christ, knows,

1. That his living time is his labouring time, but his dying time is his harvest time: whilst we live we are plowing and sowing in all the duties of Religion, but when we die, then we reap the fruit and comfort of all our labours and duties, *Gal.* 6. 8, 9. As much therefore as the reaping time is better than the sowing and plowing time, so much better is the death than the life of a believer.

2. A Believers living time is his fighting time, but his dying time is his conquering and triumphing time, 1 *Cor.* 15. 55, 56. The conflict is sharp, but the triumph is sweet; and as much as victory and triumph is better than fighting, so much is death better than life, to him that dyeth in Jesus.

3. A Believers living time is his tiresome and weary time, but his dying time is his resting and sleep-

faint, there we rest in our beds, and as much as refreshing rest in sleep is better than tiring and fainting; so much is a Believers death better than his life.

4. A Believers living time is his waiting and longing time, but his time of dying is the time of enjoying what he hath long wished and waited for, *Phil.* 1. 23. Here we groan and sigh for Christ, there we behold and enjoy Christ, and so much as vision and fruition is better and sweeter than hoping and waiting for it; so much is a believers death better than his life.

2. As the advantage a Believer makes of death is great to him by dying only in Christ; so it is much greater, and the richest improvement that can be made of death to die for Christ as well as in Christ: For compare them in a few particulars and you shall find,

1. That though a natural death hath less *horrour*, yet a violent death for Christ hath more *honour* in it. To him that dies united with Christ the grave is *a bed of rest*; but to him that dies as a Martyr for Christ, the grave is a bed of honor, *To you* (saith the Apostle) *it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe, but also to suffer for his sake*, 1 *Phil.* 29. To you it is granted as a great honour and favour to suffer for Christ; all that live in Christ have not the honour to lay down their lives for Christ. It was the great trouble of *Ludovicus Marsacus*, a Knight of *France*, to be exempted

Cur me non quoque torq; donas, & illustris illius ordinis militem non creas

because of his dignity, from wearing his chain for Christ, as the other Prisoners did, and he resented it, as a great injury, Give me (saith he to his Keeper) my chain as well as they, and create me a Knight of that noble Order.

2. By a natural death we only submit our selves to the unavoidable consequence of sin, but in dying a violent death for Christ, we give our testimony against the evil of sin, and for the precious truths of Jesus Christ. The first is the payment of a debt of justice due by the fal of *Adam*; the second is the paymēt of a debt of thankfulness and obedience due to Christ, who redeemed us with his own blood. Thus we become witnesses for God, as wel as sufferers upon the account of sin: In the first, sin witnesseth against us, in this we witness against it; and indeed it is a great testimony against the evil of sin: We declare to all the world that there is not so much evil in a Dungeon, in a bloody Ax, or consuming flames as there is in sin: That it is far better to loss our carnal friends, estates, liberties, and lives, than part with Christs truths and a good Conscience, as *Zuinglius* said, What sort of death should not a Christian chuse, what punishment should he not rather undergo; yea into what vault of hell should he not rather chuse to be cast: than to witness against truth & conscience.

Quis non oportet mortis præ ligere, quod non supplicium potius ferre imo inquam profundum inferni Abyssum non intrare, quam contra conscientiam atteſtari?

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3. A natural death in Chriſt may be as ſafe to our ſelves, but a violent death for Chriſt, will be more beneficial to others; by the former we ſhall come to heaven our ſelves, but by the latter we may bring many ſouls thither. The blood of the Martyrs is truely called the ſeed of the Church. Many waxed confident by *Pauls* bonds, his ſufferings fell out to the furtherance of the Goſpel, and ſo may ours: In this caſe a Chriſtian, like *Samſon*, doth greater ſervice againſt Satan and his cauſe, by his death, than by his life.

If we only die a natural death in our beds we die in poſſeſſion of the truths of Chriſt our ſelves but if we die Martyrs for Chriſt, we ſecure that precious inheritance to the generations to come and thoſe that are yet unborn ſhall bleſs God, not only for his truths, but for our conrage, zeal, and conſtancy by which it was preſerved for them, and tranſmitted to them.

By all this you ſee that death to a Believer is great gain, it's great gain if he only die in Chriſt, it's all that, and a great deal more added, if he alſo die for Chriſt: And he that is aſſured of ſuch advantages by death either way, muſt needs feel his fears of death ſhrink away before ſuch aſſurance; yea, he will rather have life in patience, and death in deſire; he will not only ſubmit quietly but rejoyce exceedingly to be uſed by God in ſuch honourable imployment. Aſſurance will call a bloudy death a ſafe paſſage to *Canaan* through the Red Sea. It will call

potius nobis delicia quam tormenta ſunt. Baſil.

Satan that inſtigates theſe his inſtruments, and all that are imployed in ſuch bloody work by him, ſo many *Balaams* brought to curſe, but they do indeed bleſs the people of God, and not curſe them. The aſſured Chriſtian, looks upon his death as his wedding day, *Rev.* 19. 7. And therefore it doth not much differ whether the horſe ſent to fetch him to Chriſt be pale, or red, ſo he may be with Chriſt his love, as *Ignatius* call'd him.

He looks upon death as his day of enlargement out of Priſon, 2 *Cor.* 5. 8. and it is not much odds what hand open the door, or whether a friend or enemy cloſe his eyes, ſo he have his liberty, and may be with Chriſt.

O then, give the Lord no reſt till your hearts be at reſt by the aſſurance of his love, and the pardon of your ſins when you can boldly ſay, the Lord *is your help*, you will quickly ſay what immediately follows, I *will not fear what man ſhal do unto me*, *Heb.* 13. 6. And why, if thy heart be upright, mayeſt thou not attain it? Full aſſurance is poſſible, elſe it had not been put into the command, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. The ſealing graces are in you, the ſealing ſpirit is ready to do it for you, the ſealing promiſes belong to you; but we give not all dilligence, and therefore go without the comfort of it: Would we pray more and ſtrive more, would we keep our hearts with a ſtricter watch, mortifie ſin more throughly and walk before God more accurately; how ſoon may we attain this bleſſed aſſurance, and in it, an excellent cure for our diſtracting and ſlaviſh fears.

8. *Rule*

8. *Rule,*

Let him that designs to free himself of distracting fears, be careful to maintain the purity of his conscience, and integrity of his wayes in the whole course of his conversation in this world.

Uprightness will give us boldness, and purity will yeeld us peace, *Isa.* 32. *The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever.* Look as fear follows guilt and guile, so peace and quietness follows righteousness and sincerity, *Prov.* 28. 1. *The wicked flee when none pursueth, but the righteous are bold as a lyon.* His confidence is great, because his Conscience is quiet, the peace of God guards his heart and mind. There are three remarkable stepts by which Christians rise to the hight of courage in tribulations, *Rom.* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. First they are justified and acquitted from guilt by faith, *v.* 1. Then they are brought into a state of favour and acceptation with God. *v.* 2. Thence they rise one step higher, even to a view of Heaven, and the glory to come, *v.* 3. and from thence they take an easie step to glorying in tribulations, *v.* 4.

I say, 'tis an easie step, for let a man once obtain the pardon of sin, the favour of God, and a believing view and prospect of the glory to come, and it is so easie to triumph in tribulation, in such a station as that is, that it will be as hard to hinder it, as to hinder a man from laughing when he is tickled.

Christians have alwayes found it a spring of courage and comfort. 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. *This is our*

rejoycing, even the teſtimony of our Conſciences, that in all ſincerity and godly ſimplicity, not with fleſhly wiſdom, but by the grace of God; we have had our converſation in this world. Their hearts did not reproach them with by-ends in Religion; their Conſciences witneſſed that they made not Religion a cloak to cover any fleſhly deſign, but were ſincere in what they profeſſed; and this enabled them to rejoyce in the midſt of ſufferings. An earthen veſſel ſet empty to the fire will crak and fly in pieces, and ſo will en hypocritical, formal, and meer nominal Chriſtian: but he that hath ſuch ſubſtantial and real principles of courage as theſe within him, will endure the trial, and be never the worſe for the fire.

The very Heathens diſcovered the advantage of Moral integrity, and the peace it yielded their natural Conſciences in times of trouble.

Nil conſcire tibi, nullâ palleſcere culpa hic murus aheneus eſto---- It was to them as a wall of braſs, much more will godly ſimplicity, and the ſprinkling of the blood of Chriſt upon our Conſciences, ſecure and encourage our hearts. This Atheiſtical Age laughs conſcience and purity to ſcorn but let them laugh, this is it will make thee laugh when they ſhall cry. *Paul exastko meditor, operam do.* exerciſed himſelf, or made it his buſineſs, *To have alwaies a Conſcience void of offence, both towards God and towards men,* Acts 24. 16. And it was richly worth his labour, it repayed him ten thouſand fold in the peace, courage, and comfort it gave him in all the troubles of his life, which were great and many.

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Conſcience muſt be the bearing ſhoulder on which the burden muſt lie, beware therefore it be not galled with guilt, or put out of joynt by any fall into ſin, 'tis ſad bearing on ſuch a ſhoulder: Inſtead of bearing burdens, you will not be able to bear its pain and anguiſh. To prevent this carefully; obſerve theſe rules,

1. Over-awe your hearts every day and in every place with the eye of God; this walking as before God will keep you upright, *Gen.* 17. 1, If you ſo ſpeak and live as thoſe that know God ſees you, ſuch will be your uprightneſs, that you will not care if all the world ſee you too. An Artiſt came to *Druſius* and offered to build him an houſe ſo contrived, that he might do what he would within doors and no man ſee him; nay ſaid *Druſius*, ſo build it that every one may ſee.

2. Do no action, undertake no deſign that you dare not preface with Prayer; this is your rule, *Phil.* 4. 6. Touch not with that you dare not pray for a bleſſing upon; if you dare not pray, dare not to engage: If you cannot ſend your prayers before, be confident ſhame and guilt will follow after.

3. Be more afraid of grieving God, or wounding Concience, than of diſpleaſing or loſing all the friends you have in the world beſides; look upon every adventure, upon ſin to eſcape danger, to be the ſame thing as if he would ſink the Ship to avoid one that you take to be a Pirate; or as the fatal miſtakes of two vials wherein there is poyſon and phyſick.

4. What counsel you would give another, that give your selves, when the case shal be your own; your judgement is most clear, when interest is least felt; *Davids* judgment was very upright, when he judged himself in a *remote parable.*

5. Be willing to bear the faithful reproofs of your faults from men, as the reproving voice of God, for they are no less when duely administred This will be a good help to keep you upright, *Psal.* 135. 23, 24. *Let the Righteous smite me, &c.* It is said of Sir *Anthony Cope*, that he shamed none so much as himself in his family prayers, and desired the Ministers of his acquaintance not to favour his faults; but tell me, said he, and spare not.

6. Be mindful daily of your dying day, and your great Audit day, and do all with respect to them: Thus keep your integrity and peace, and that will keep out your fears and terrors.

9. *Rule.*

Carefully record the experiences of Gods care over you, and faithfulneß to you in all your past dangers, and distresses, and apply them to the cure of your present fears and despondencies.

Recorded experiences are excellent remedies, *Exod.* 17. 14. *Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshuah.* There were two things in that Record; the victory obtained over *Amalek*, and the way of obtaining it by incessant prayer: And there were two things to be done to secure this mercy for their use and benefit in future fears, it must be recorded and rehearsed, preserved from oblivion, and seasonably produced for relief. There

There are two ſpecial aſſiſtances given us againſt fear by experience.

1. It abates the terror of Sufferings.
2. It aſſiſts Faith in the promiſes.

1. Experience greatly abates the terror of ſufferings, and makes them leſs formidable and ſcaring than otherwiſe they would be, fear ſaith they, are deep waters, and will drown us; experience ſaith they, are much ſhallower than we think, and are ſafely fordable: Others have, and we may paſs through that Red ſea, and not be overwhelmed. Fear ſaith the pains of death are unconceivable ſharp and bitter, the living little know what the dying feel; and to lie in a ſtinking Priſon in continual expectations of a cruel death is an inſupportable evil: Experience contradicts all theſe falſe reports which make our hearts faint, as the ſecond *Spies* did the daunting ſtories of the firſt; and aſſures us, Priſons and Death are not when we come home to them for Chriſt, what they ſeem and appear to be at a diſtance. O what a good report have thoſe faithful men given who have ſearched and tried theſe things! Who have gone down themſelves into the valley of the ſhaddow of death, and ſeen what there is in a Priſon, and in death it ſelf, ſo long as they were in ſight and hearing able by words or ſigns to contradict our falſe Notions of it. O what a ſweet account did *Pomponius Algerius* give of his ſtinking Priſon, at *Lyons* in *France*! Dating all his Letters whileſt he was

there, *From the delectable Orchard of the* Leonine *Priſon*: And when carried to *Venice*, *in a Letter from the priſon there he writes thus to his Chriſtian friends*; *I ſhal utter that which ſcarce any will believe, I have found a neſt of honey in the enterails of a lyon, a Paradiſe of pleaſure in a deep dark dungeon, in the place of ſorrow and death, tranquillity of hope, and life. O here it is, that the ſpirit of God, and of glory reſts upon us.*

So Bleſſed Mr. *Philpot* our own Martyr, in one of his ſweet encouraging Letters, *O how my heart leaps, (ſaith he) that I am ſo near to eternal bliſs, God forgive me my unthankfulneſs and unworthineſs of ſo great glory: I have ſo much joy of the reward prepared for me, the moſt wretched ſinner, that though I be in the place of darkneſs and mourning yet I cannot lament, but am night and day ſo joyful as though I were under no croſs at all; in all the days of my life I was never ſo joyful, the name of the Lord be praiſed.*

Others have given the ſignals agreed upon betwixt them and their friends in the midſt of the flames, thereby to the laſt confirming this truth, that God makes the inſide of ſufferings quite another thing what the appearance and outſide of them is to ſenſe. Thus the experience of others abates the terrors of ſufferings to you; and all this is fully confirmed by the perſonal experience you yourſelves have had of the ſupport and comforts of God, wherein ſoever you have conſcientiouſly ſuffered for his ſake.

2. And this cannot but be a ſingular aſſiſtance to your faith, your own and others experiences;

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juſt like *Aaron* and *Hur*, ſtay up the hands of faith one the on ſide and the other that they hang not down, whilſt your fears like thoſe *Amalekites* fall before you. For what is experience, but the bringing down of the Divine promiſes to the teſt of ſenſe and feeling? It is our duty to believe the promiſes without tryal and experiments, but it is eaſier to do it after ſo many trials; ſo that your own and other experiences carefully recorded and ſeaſonably applied; would be food to your faith, and a cure to many of your fears in a ſuffering day.

10. *Rule.*

You can never free your ſelves from ſinful fears, till you throughly believe and conſider Chriſts providential Kingdom over all the creatures and affairs in this lower world.

Poor timorous ſoul, is there not a King, a Suprem Lord under whom devils and men are? Hath not Chriſt the reins of Government in his hands? *Matth.* 28. 18. *Phil.* 2. 9, 10, 11, 12. *John* 17. 2. Were this dominion of Chriſt and dependence of all creatures on him well ſtudied & believed, it would cut off both our truſt in men, and our fear of men; we ſhould ſoon diſcern they have no power either to *help* us, or to *hurt* us but what they receive from above. Our enemies are apt to over-rate their own power in their pride, and we are as apt to over-rate it too in our fears. *Knowſt thou not*, ſaith *Pilate* to Chriſt, *that I have power to crucifie thee, and I have power to releaſe thee*, q. d. Refuſeſt thou to anſwer me? doſt thou not know who

and

and what I am? Yes, yes, saith Christ, I know thee well enough to be a poor impotent creature, who hast no power at all, but what is given thee from above; I know thee and therefore do not fear thee. But we are apt to take their own boasts for truth, and believe their power to be such as they vainly vogue it to be; whereas in truth all your enemies are sustained by Christ, *Colos.* 1. 17. they are bounded and limited by Christ, *Rev.* 2. 10. Providence hath its influences upon their hearts and wills immediately, *Jer.* 15. 11. *Psal.* 106. 46. So that they cannot do whatever they would do, but their wills as well as their hands are ordered by God. *Jacob* was in *Laban*'s and in *Esau*'s hands; both hated him, but neither could hurt him. *David* was in *Sauls* hand, who hunted for him as a prey, yet is forced to dismiss him quietly, blessing instead of slaying him. *Melancthon* and *Pomeren* both fell into the hands of *Charles* the Fifth, than whom Christendom had not a more prudent Prince, nor the Church of Christ a fiercer enemy; yet he treats these great and active Reformers gently, dismisseth them freely, not once forbidding them to preach or print the Doctrine which he so much opposed and hated.

O Christian, if ever thou wilt get above thy fears, settle these things upon thy heart by faith:

1. That the reins of Government are in Christs hands; enemies like wild horses may prance and tramp up and down the world, as though they would tread down all that are in their way; but the bridle of Providence is in

their mouths, and upon their proud necks, 2 *Kings* 19. 28. And that bridle hath a ſtrong crub.

2. The care of the Saints properly pertains to Chriſt; he is the head of the body, *Eph.* 1. 22, 23. Our conſulting head: And it were a reproach and diſhonour to Chriſt, to fill our own heads with diſtracting cares and fears, when we have ſo wiſe an head to conſult and contrive for us.

3. You have lived all your dayes upon the care of Chriſt hitherto, no truth is more manifeſt than this, that there hath been a wiſdom beyond your own, that hath guided your wayes, *Jer.* 10. 23. A power above your own, that hath ſupported your burdens, *Pſal.* 73. 26. A ſpring of relief out of your ſelves that hath ſupplied all your wants, *Luke* 22. 35. He hath performed all things for you.

4. Jeſus Chriſt hath ſecured his people by many promiſes to take care of them how dangerous ſoever the times ſhall be, *Eccl.* 8. 12. *Pſal.* 76. 10. *Amos* 9. 8, 9. *Rom.* 8. 28. O if theſe things were throughly believed and well improved! fears could no more diſtract or afflict our hearts, than ſtorms or clouds could trouble the upper Region: But we forget his providences and promiſes and ſo are juſtly left in the hands of our own fears to be afflicted for it.

II. *Rule.*

Subject your carnal reaſonings to Faith and keep your thoughts more under the government of Faith, if ever you expect a compoſed and quiet heart in diſtracting evil times

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He that layeth aſide the Rules of Faith, and meaſures all things by the rule of his own ſhallow reaſon, wil be his own bugbear; if reaſon may be permitted to judge all things, and to make its own inferences and concluſions from the aſpects and appearances of ſecond cauſes, your hearts ſhall have no reſt day nor night: this alone wil keep you in continual Alarms.

And yet how apt are the beſt men to meaſure things by this rule, and to judge of all Gods deſigns and myſterious providences by it: In other things it is the Judge and *Arbiter*, and therefore we would make it ſo here too; and what it concludes and dictates are backt and befriended by ſenſe, whence it gathers its intelligence and information. *O quem ſapiens Argumentatrix ſibi videtur ratio humana*? How wiſe and ſtrong do its Arguments and concluſions ſeem to us, ſaith *Luther*. This carnal reaſon is the thing that puts us into ſuch confuſions of mind and thoughts. 'Tis this that,

1. Quarrels with the promiſes, ſhakes their credit, and our confidence in them, *Exod.* 5. 22, 23.

2. 'Tis this that boldly limits the divine power and aſſigns it boundaries of its own fixing, *Pſal.* 78. 20, 41.

3. 'Tis carnal reaſon that draws deſperate concluſions from providential appearances and aſpects, 1 *Sam.* 27. 1. and prognoſticates our ruine from them.

4. 'Tis this carnal reaſon that puts us upon ſinful ſhifts and indirect courſes to deliver and

ſave

ſave our ſelves from danger, which do but the more perplex and entangle us, Iſa. 30. 15, 16.

5. It is moſtly from our arrogant reaſonings that our thoughts are diſcompoſed and divided; from this fountain it is that they flow into our hearts in multitudes when dangers are near, *Pſ.* 94. 19. *Pſal.* 42. 1. All theſe miſchiefs owe themſelves to the exorbitant actings and intruſions of our carnal reaſons; but theſe things ought not to be ſo, this is beſide rule. For,

1. Though there be nothing in the matters of faith, or providence contrary to right reaſon, yet there are many things in both, quite above the reach, and beyond the ken of reaſon, *Iſa.* 55. 8. And,

2. The confident dictates of reaſon are frequently confuted by experience all the world over; 'tis every day made a liar, and the frights it puts us into, proved to be vain and groundleſs, *Iſa.* 51. 13.

Nothing then can be better for us, than to reſign up our reaſon to faith, to ſee all things through the promiſes, and truſt God over all events.

12. *Rule.*

To conclude, exalt the fear of God in your hearts, and let it gain the aſcendent over all your other fears.

This is the preſcription in my Text, for the cures of all our ſlaviſh fears, and indeed all the forementioned rules for the cure of ſinful fears run into this, and are reducible to it. For,

1. Doth the knowledge and application of the covenant of Grace cure our fears? the fear of God

God is both a part of that Covenant, and an evidence of our interest in it, *Jer.* 32.40.

2. Doth sinful fear plunge men into such distresses of Conscience? Why, the fear of God will preserve your ways clean and pure, *Ps.* 19.9. and so those mischiefs will be prevented.

3. Doth foresight and provision for evil days prevent distracting fears when they come? Nothing like the fear of God enables us to such a prevision, and provision for them, *Heb.* 11.7.

4. Do we relieve our selves against Fear by committing all to God? Surely 'tis the fear of God that drives us to him as our only *Asylum*; and sure refuge, *Mal.* 3.16. They feared God, and thought upon his name, (*i.e.*) they meditated on his name which was their refuge, his Attributes their chambers of rest.

5. Must our affections to the world be mortified, before our fears can be subdued? This is the instrument of mortification, *Neh.* 5.15.

6. Do the worthy examples of those that are gone before us, tend to the cure of our cowardise and fears? Why, the fear of God will provoke in you an holy self-jealousie, lest you fail of the grace they manifested, and come shott of those excellent paterns, *Heb.* 12.15.

7. Is the assurance of interest in God, and the pardon of sin, such an excellent Antidote against slavish fear? Why, he that walks in the fear of God, shall walk in the comforts of the Holy Ghost also, *Acts* 9.31.

8. Is integrity of heart and way such a fountain of courage in evil times? Know Reader,

no

no grace promotes this integrity and uprightneſs more than the fear of God doth, *Prov.* 16.6. *Prov.* 23. 17.

9. Do the reviving of paſt experiences ſuppreſs ſinful fears; no doubt this was the ſubject which the fear of God put them upon, for mutual encouragement, *Mal.* 3, 16.

10. Are the providences of God in the world ſuch cordials againſt fear; The fear of God is the very character and mark of thoſe perſons over whom his providence ſhall watch in the difficulteſt times, *Eccl.* 8. 12.

11. Doth our truſting in our own reaſon, and making it our rule and meaſure, breed ſo many fears? Why, the fear of God will take men off from ſuch ſelf-confidence, and bring them to truſt the faithful God with all doubtful iſſues and events, as the very ſcope of my Text fully manifeſts. Fear not their fear; their fear moving by the direction of carnal reaſon drove them not to God, but to the *Aſſyrian* for help, follow not you their example in this: But how ſhall they help it; Why, ſanctifie the Lord of Hoſts and make him your fear.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Answering the most material Pleas for slavish Fears, and dissolving the common Objections against courage and constancy of mind in times of danger.

THE Pleas and excuses for our cowardliness and faintness in the day of trouble are endless, and so would his task be that should undertake particularly to answer them all. 'Tis but the cutting off an *Hydra*'s head, when one is gone, ten more start up; what is most material I will here take into consideration. When good men (for with such I am dealing in this chapter) see a formidable face and appearance of sharp and bloody times approaching them; they begin to tremble their hearts faint, and their hands hang down with unbecoming despondency, and pusillanimity; their thoughts are so distracted, their reason and faith so clouded by their fears that their temptations are thereby exceedingly strengthned upon them, and their principles and professions brought under the derision and contempts of their enemies; and if their brethren, to whom God hath given more courage and constancy, and who discern the mischief like to ensue from their uncomely carriage, admonish and advise them of it: They have abundance of Pleas and defences

defences for their fears; yea, when they reason the point of suffering in their own thoughts, and the matter is debated (as in such times it's common) betwixt faith and fear, O what endless work do their fears put upon their faith, to solve all the *Buts* and *Ifs* which their fears will object or suppose.

Some of the principal of them I think it worth while here to consider, and endeavour to satisfie, that if possible I may prevail with all gracious persons to be more magnanimous. And first of all:

1. *Plea.*

Sufferings for Christ are strange things to the Christians of this age, we have had the happy lot to fall into milder times than the Primative Christians did, or those that strugled in our own land in the beginning of Reformation; and therefore we may be excused for our fears, by reason of our own unacquaintedness with sufferings in our times.

Answer.

1. One fault is but a bad excuse for another, why are sufferings such strangers to you? Why did you not cast upon them in the days of peace, and reckon that such days must come? Did you not covenant with Christ to follow him whithersoever he should go, to take up your cross and follow him? And did not the World plainly tell you, that *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution*, 2 Tim. 3. 12. *And that we must through much tribulation enter*

ing

into the Kingdom of God, Acts 14. 22. Did we fall asleep in quiet and prosperous days, and dream of Halcon days all our time on earth? that the mountain our prosperity stood strong, and we should never be moved? That we should die in our nest, and multiply our days as the sand; *Babylon*'s Children indeed dream so, *Rev.* 18. 7. but the Children of *Sion* should be better instructed. Alas! how soon may the brighteſt day be overcast? The weather is not so variable, as the state of the Church in this world is; now a calm, *Acts* 9. 31. and then a storm, *Acts* 12. 1, 2. You could not but know what contingent and variable things all things on earth are; Why then did you delude your selves with such fond dreams? But as a learned man rightly *Cerſon.* observes, *Mundus ſeneſcens patitur Phantaſias*, The older the world grows the more drowzie and doting it still grows, and these are the days in which the wise as well as the foolish Virgins slumber. Sure 'tis but a bad Plea after so many warnings from the word; and from the rod to say, I did not think of such times, I dreamed not of them.

2, Or if you say, though you have conversed with death and sufferings by speculation, yet you lived not in such times wherein you might see (as others sufferers did) the encouraging faith, patience, and zeal of others set before your eye in a lively pattern and example. Sufferings were not only familiarized to them by frequency, but facilitated also by the daily example of those that went before them.

But

But think you indeed that nothing but encouragement and advantage to followers, arose from the trials of those that went before? Alas, there were sometimes the greatest damps and and discouragements imaginable; the zeal of those that followed hath often been inflamed by the faintings of those that were tried before them. In the Seventh Persecution under *Decius*, there were standing *Anno* 250. before the Tribunal, certain of the Warriours or Knights, *viz. Ammon, Zenon, Ptolomeus, Ingenuus*, and a certain aged man called *Theophelus*, who all standing by as Spectators when a certain Christian was examined, and their seeing him for fear ready to decline, and fall away, did almost burst for sorrow within themselves; they made signs to him with their hands, and all gestures of the body to be constant; this being noted be all the standers by, they were ready to lay hold upon them; but they preventing the matter, pressed up of their own accord, before the bench of the judge, professing themselves to be Christians, insomuch that both the *President* and the *Benchers* were all astonished, and the Christians which were judged, the more encouraged. Such damping spectacles the Christians of former ages had frequently set them before them.

And it was no small trial to some of them, to hear the faintings and abnegation of those that went before them, pleaded against their constancy; as in the time of *Valens* it was urged by the Persecutors: Those that came to their trial before

fore you, have acknowledged their errors, begged our pardon, and turned to us; and why will you ſtand it out ſo obſtinately? But the Chriſtians anſwered, *Nos hac poti ſſimum ratione viriliter ſtabimus, For this very reaſon we will ſtand to it the more manfully, to repair their ſcandal, by our greater courage for Chriſt.* Theſe were the helps and advantages they often had in thoſe days, therefore lay not ſo much ſtreſs upon that; their courage undoubtedly flowed from an higher ſpring and better principle, than the company they ſuffered with.

3. And if preſidents and experiences of others to break the Ice before you, be ſo great an advantage, ſurely we that live in theſe latter times have the moſt and beſt helps of that nature that ever any people in the world had. You have all their examples recorded for your encouragement, and therefore *Think it not ſtrange concerning the fiery trial, as though ſome ſtrange thing had happened to you,* as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 Pet. 4. 12. This Plea is weighed, and no great weight found in it.

2. *Plea.*

But my nature is ſoft and tender, my conſtitution more weak and ſubject to the impreſſions of fear than others; ſome that have robuſt bodies and hardy ſtout minds, may better grapple with ſuch difficulties than I can, who by conſtitution and education am altogether unfit to grapple with thoſe torments, that I have not patience enough to hear related; my heart faints and dies within me, if I do but read or hear of the barbarous

barbarous usages of the martyrs, and therefore I may well be excused for my fears and faint-heartedness when the case is like to be my own.

Answer.

1. 'Tis a great mistake to think that the meer strength of natural constitution can carry any one through such sufferings for Christ, or, that natural tenderness and weakness Divinelie assisted, cannot bear the heaviest burdens that ever God laid upon the shoulders of any sufferer for Christ. Our suffering and bearing abilities are not from Nature but from Grace. We find men of stronge bodies and resolute daring minds, have fainted in time of trial. Doctor *Pendleton* in our own story was a man of a robust and massie bodie, and a resolute daring mind; yet when he came to the trial, he utterly fainted and fell off. On the other side, what poor feeble bodies have sustained the greatest torments! & out of weakness been made strong, *Heb.* 11. 34. The Virgin *Eulalia* of *Emerita* in *Portugal* was young and tender, but Twelve years old, and with much indulgence and tenderness brought up in an honourable family, being a person of considerable quality; yet how couragiously did she sustain the most cruel Torments for Christ! when the Judge fawned upon her with this tempting language, Why wilt thou kill thy self, so young a flower, and so near those honourable Marriages and great Dowries thou mayest enjoy: Instead of returning a retracting or doubtful answer, *Eulalia* threw down the Idol, and spurn abroad with her

her feet the heap incense prepared for the censers; And when the Executioner came to her, she intertained him with this language, Go to thou Hangman, burn, cut, mangle thou these earthly members; it is an easie matter to break a brittle substance, but the inward mind thou shalt not hurt. And when one joynt was pulled from another, she said, Behold, what a pleasure it is for them O Christ, that remember thy triumphant victories, to attain unto these high dignities. So that our constitutional strength is not to be made the measure of our passive fortitude: God can make the feebleſt and tendereſt person stand, when strong bodies and blustering, resolute, daring minds faint and fall.

Acts and Mon. v. 1. p. 120.

2. Are our bodies so weak, and hearts so tender that we can bear no sufferings for Christ; Then we are no way fit to be his followers. Christianity is a warfare, and Christians must endure hardship, 2 *Tim.* 2, 3. Delicacy and tenderness is as odd a sight in a Christian, as it is in a Souldier: And we cannot be Christs disciples, except we deliberate the terms, and having considered well what it is like to cost us, do resolve in the strength of God to run the hazard of all with him and for him. 'Tis in vain to talk of a Religion that we think not worthie the suffering and enduring any great matter for.

3. And if indeed Reader, thy constitution be so delicate and tender, that thou art not able to bear the thoughts of torments for Christ;

how

how is it thou art not more terrified with the torments of hell, which all they that deny Christ on earth must feel and bear eternally! O what is the wrath of man in comparison with the wrath of GOD! but as the bite of a flea to the rending of a Lyon. This is the consideration propounded by Christ, in *Matth.* 10.28. *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* The infinite and insupportable wrath of the great and terrible GOD should make our souls shrink and shake at the thoughts of it, rather than the sufferings of the flesh which are but for a moment.

4. Know that the wisdom and tenderness of thy father, wil proportion the burden thou must bear, to thy back that must bear it; he will debate in measure, and not overload thy feeble shoulders: Thou shalt find those things easie in trial, that now seem insupportable in the terrible prospect; a way of escape or support will certainly be opened that thou mayest be able to bear it.

3. *Plea.*

But others plead the sad experience they have had of their own feebleness and weakness in former trials and excercises of an inferiour nature, in which their faith and patience hath failed them: and how can they imagine they shal ever be able to stand in the fiercest and most firery trial? *If we have run with the footmen and they have wearied us in the land of peace, how shall we then contend with horses in the swellings of Jordan? Jer.* 12. 5.

Answer.

1. We are ſtrong or weak in all our Trials, be they great or ſmall, according to the aſſiſting grace we receive from above; if he leave us in a common & light trial to our own *ſtrength* it will be our over-match, and if he aſſiſt us in great and extraordinary trials we ſhall be more than Conquerours. At one time *Abrabam* could offer up his only ſon to God with his own hand; at another time he is ſo afraid of his life, that he acts very unſuitable to the character of a Believer, and was ſhamefully rebuked for it by *Abimeleck*. At one time *David* could ſay, though an Hoſt encamp againſt me I will not fear: At another time he feigns himſelf mad, and acted beneath himſelf, both as a man, and as a man enriched with ſo much faith and experience. At one time *Peter* is afraid to be interrogated by a Maid; at another time he could boldly confront the whole Council, and own Chriſt and his truths to their faces. In extraordinary trials, we may warrantably expect extraordinary aſſiſtances, and by them we ſhall be carried through the greateſt. how often ſoever we have failed in ſmaller trials.

2. The deſign and end of God in giving us experience of our own weakneſs in leſſer troubles, is not to diſcourage and daunt us againſt we come to greater, (which is the uſe Satan here makes of it) but to take us off from ſelf-confidence and ſelf-dependence; to make us ſee our own weakneſs, that we may more heartily and humbly betake our ſelves to him in the way

of faith and fervent supplication.

4. Plea.

But some will object that they cannot help their fears and tremblings when any danger appears; because fear is the disease, at least the sad effect and Symptome of a disease with which God hath wounded them, a deep and fixed melancholy hath so far prevailed, that the least trouble overcomes them: If any sad afflictive providence befal, or but threaten them; their fears presently rise, and their hearts sink, sleep departs, thoughts tumultuate, the blood boyls, and the whole frame of nature is put into disorder. If therefore the Lord should permit such great and dreadful trials to befal them, they can think of nothing less then dying by the hand of their own fears, before the hand of any enemy touch them; or which is a thousand times worse, be driven by their fears into the net of temptation, even to deny the Lord that bought them.

Answer.

This I know is the sad case of many gracious persons, and I have reason to pity those that are thus exercised; O 'tis an heavy stroak, a dismal state, a deep wound indeed: But yet the wisdom of God hath ordered his affliction upon his people for gracious ends and uses; hereby they are made the more tender and watchful, circumspect and careful in their ways, that they may shun and escape as many occasions of trouble as they can, being so enable to grapple with them. I say not but there are higher and nobler motives that make them circumspect and

tender, but yet the preservation of our own quietness is useful in its place, and 'tis a mercy if that or any thing else be sanctified to prevent sin, and promote care of duty. This is your clog to keep you from staying.

2. And when you shall be called forth to greater trials, that which you call your snare, may be your advantage, and that in diverse respects.

1. These very distempers of body and mind serve to imbitter the comforts and pleasures of this world to you, and make life it self less desirable to you than it is to others, they much wean your hearts from, and make life more burdensome to you then it is to others who enjoy more of the pleasure and sweetness of it than you can do. I have often thought this to be one design and end of Providence in permitting such distempers to seize so many gracious persons as labour under it, and providence knows how to make use of this effect to singular purpose and advantage to you, when a call to suffering shal come; this may have its place and use under higher and more spiritual considerations to facilitate death, and make your separation from this world the more easie to you; for though it be a more noble and raised act of faith and self denyal to offer up to God our lives, when they are made

It was common with the martyrs to sweeten death to themselves by reckoning what infirmities it would cure them of, one of his blindness, another of his lameness, &c.

made moſt pleaſant and deſirable to us upon natural accounts, yet it is not ſo eaſie to part with them as it is when God hath firſt imbittered them to us. Your lives are of little value to you now. becauſe of this burdenſome clog you muſt draw after you, but if you ſhould increaſe your burden by ſo horrid an addition of guilt, as the denying of Chriſt, or his known truths would do, you would not know what to do with ſuch a life; it would certainly lie upon your hands as as burthen. God knows how to uſe theſe things in the way of his providence to your great advantage.

2. Art thou a poor melancholy and timorous perſon? Certainly if thou be gracious as well as timorous this will drive thee nearer to God; and the greater thy dangers are, the more frequent and fervent will thy addreſſes to him be: Thou feeleſt the need of everlaſting arms underneath thee to bear thee up under, and to carry through ſmaller troubles; that other perſons make nothing of, much more in ſuch deep trials, that put the ſtrongeſt Chriſtians to the utmoſt of their faith and patience.

And 3dly. What if the Lord will make an advantage out of your weakneſs, to diſplay more evidently his own power in your ſupport? you know what the Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *Cor.* 12. 9, 10 *And he ſaid unto me, my grace is ſufficient for thee; for my ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs: moſt gladly therefore will I glery in my infirmities, that the power of Chriſt may reſt upon me-----for when I am weak, then am I ſtrong.* If his infirmitie

might serve as a foil to set off the grace of God with a more bright and sparkling lustre, he would rejoyce in his infirmities, and so should you: Well then, let not this discourage you, the infirmity of nature you complain of may make death the less terrible; it served to that purpose to blessed *Basil* (as you heard before) when his enemy threatned to tear out his Liver, he thought it a kindness to have that Liver torn out that had given him so much trouble, It may drive thee nearer to God, and minister a fit opportunity for the display of his grace in the time of need.

5. *Plea.*

But what if God should hide his face from my soul in the day of my streights and troubles, and not only so, but permit *Satan* to buffet me with his horrid temptations and injections, and so I should fall like the Ship in which *Paul* sailed, betwixt these two boisterous Seas; what can I suspect less than a shipwrack of my soul, body, and all the comforts of both, in this world, and in that to come?

Answer.

1. So far as the fears of such a misery awaken you to prayer for the prevention of it, it may be serviceable to your souls, but when it only works distraction and despondency of mind, it is your sin; and *Satans* snare. The Prophet *Jeremy* made a good use of such a supposed evil by way of deprecation, *Jer.* 17.17. *Be not a terror unto me, thou art my hope in the day of evil.* q. d. In the evil day I have no place of retreat or refuge,

ſuge, but thy love and favour; Lord that is all I have to depend on, and relieve my ſelf by: I comfort my ſelf againſt trouble with this confidence, that if men be cruel, yet thou wilt be kind; if they frown, thou wilt ſmile; if the world caſt me out, thou wilt take me in; but if thou ſhouldeſt be a terror to me inſtead of a comforter, if they afflict my body, and thou affright my ſoul with thy frowns too; what a deplorable condition ſhal I be in then! Improve it to ſuch an end as he did, to ſecure the favour of God, and it will do you no harm.

2, It is not uſual with God to eſtrange himſelf from his people in trouble, nor to frown upon them when men do. The common experience of Believers ſtands ready to atteſt and ſeal this truth, that Chriſtians never find more kindneſs from God, than when they feel moſt cruelty from men for his ſake; conſult the whole cloud of witneſſes, and you will find they have ſtill found the undoubted verity of that tried word, in 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. That *the ſpirit of glory and of God reſteth upon ſufferers.* The expreſſion ſeems to allude to the Dove that *Noah* ſent forth out of the Ark, which flew over the watry world, but could not reſt her ſelf any where till ſhe returned to the Ark. So the Spirit of God, called here the Spirit of Glory, from his effects & fruits, *viz.* his chearing, ſealing, and reviving influences which makes men glory and triumph in the moſt afflicted ſtate. This Spirit of God ſeems like that Dove, to hover up and down, to flee hither and thither, over this perſon and

that

that, but resteth not so long upon any, as those that suffer for righteousness sake, there he commonly takes up his abode and residence.

3. And what if it should fall out in some respect according to your fears? that heaven and earth should be both clouded together, yet it will not be long before the pleasant light will spring up to you again, *Psal.* 114. 4. *Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness.* You shall have his supporting presence till the comforter do come. When Mr. *Glover* came within sight of the stake, he suddenly cries out, O *Austin, he is come, he is come.*

6. *Plea.*

O but what if my trial should be long, and the siege of temptations tedious, then I am perswaded I am lost; I am no way able to continue long in a Prison, or in tortures for Christ, I have no strength to endure a long siege, my patience is too short to hold out from month to month, and from year to year, as many have done: O! I dread the thoughts of long continued trials, I tremble to think what must be the issue.

Answer.

1. Cannot you distrust your own strength and ability, but you must also limit Gods? What if you have but a small stock of Patience, cannot the Lord strengthen you with all might in the inner man unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness, according to his glorious power, 1 *Col.* 11. And is it not his promise to confirm you to the end, 1 *Cor.* 1. 8. You neither know

know *how much*, nor *how long* you can bear and suffer. It is not inherent, but assisting grace by which your suffering abilities are to be measured. GOD can make that little stock of patience you have to hold out as the poor Widows cruise of oyl did, till deliverance come, he can enable your patience unto its perfect work, (*i. e.*) to work as *extensively* to all the kinds and sorts of trials, as *intensively* to the highest degree of trial, and as *protensively* to the longest duration and continuance of your trials, as he would have it: If this be a marvellous thing in your eyes, must it be so in Gods eyes also?

2. The Lord knows the proper season to come in to the relief of your slideing and fainting patience, and will assuredly come in accordingly in that season; for so run the promises, *The Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants when he seeth that their power is gone; and that there is none shut up or left*, Deut. 32. 36. *Cum pulicantur lateres venit* Moses. In the mount of difficulties and extremities it shall be seen. *The rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the Righteous, lest the Righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity*, Psal. 125. 3. *Ubi desinit humanum, ibi incipit pivinum auxilium*. Gods power watches the opportunity of your weakness.

7. Plea.

But what if I should be put to cruel and exquisite tortures, suppose to the rack, to the fire, or such most dreadful sufferings as other Christians

ſtians have been, what ſhal I do? do I think I am able to bear it? is my ſtrength the ſtrength of ſtone, or are my bones braſs, that ever I ſhould endure ſuch barbarous cruelties? Alas! death in the mildeſt form is terrible to me; how terrible then muſt ſuch a death be?

Anſwer.

Who enabled thoſe Chriſtians you mention to endure theſe things? They loved their lives, and ſenſed their pains as well as you, they had the ſame thoughts and fears many of them, that you now have; yet God carried them through all, and ſo he can you: Did not he make the devouring Flames a bed of Roſes to ſome of them? Was he not within the fires? Did he not abate the extremity of the torment, and enable weake and tender perſons to endure them patiently and cheerfully? ſome ſinging in the midſt of flames, others clapping their hands triumphantly, and to the laſt ſight that could be had of them in this world, nothing appeared but ſigns and demonſtrations of joy unſpeakable. Ah friends! we judge of ſufferings by the outſide, and appearance, which is terrible; but we know not the inſide of ſufferings which is exceeding comfortable! O when ſhall we have done with our unbelieving *ifs* and *buts*, our queſtionings and doubting of the power, wiſdom, and tender care of our GOD over us, and learn to truſt him over all. Now the juſt ſhall live by faith, and he that lives by faith,

ſhall

ſhall never die by fear. The more you truſt God, the leſs you will torment your ſelves. I have done; the Lord ſtrengthen, ſtabliſh, and ſettle the trembling and feeble hearts of his people, by what hath been ſo ſeaſonably offered for their relief by a weak hand. *Amen.*

THE END.

THE

THE
RIGHTEOUS MAN'S
REFUGE
IN THE
EVIL DAY.
OR,

A Treatise upon the *Attributes* of GOD; as they are opened in his *Promises* and *Providences* for the security of his People in Storms of publick Calamities, from *Isa.* 26. v. 20.

By *John Flavel* Minister of the Gospel.

A Man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, Isa. 32. 2.

Non facilè inveniuntur præsidia in adversitate, quæ non fuerint in pace quæsita. Augustine.

EDINBURGH,

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THE EPISTLE TO THE READER.

Christian Reader.

IF Heinsius, *when he had shut up himself in the Library at* Leyden, *reckoned himself placed in the very lap of Eternity, because he conversed there with so many Divine Souls; and professed, he took his seat in it with so lofty a spirit and sweet content, that he heartily pittied all the great and rich men of the world, that were ignorant of the happineß he there dayly enjoyed. How much more may that soul rejoyce in its own happineß; who hath shut himself up in the Chambers of Divine Attributes, and exercise pity for the exposed and miserable multitude that are left as a prey to the temptations and troubles of the World.*

Plerumque in qua simulac pédem posui, foribus pessulum abdo, & in ipso eternitatis gremio inter tot illustres animas sedem mihi sumo; cum ingenti quidem animo, ut subinde Magnatum me misereat qui felicitatem hanc ignorant. *Epistola primira.*

That

That the days are evil is a truth preached to us by the convincing voice of ſenſe, and that they are like to be worſe, few can doubt that look into the moral cauſes of evil times, the impudent height of ſin, or into the Propheſies relating to theſe latter dayes; for whom the ſharpeſt ſufferings are appointed, to make way for the ſweeteſt mercies. A faithful Watchman of our own hath given us freſh and late warning in theſe words of truth. Hath God ſaid nothing? Doth Faith ſee nothing of a flood coming upon us? Is there ſuch a deluge of ſin among us, and doth not that Propheſie to us of a deluge of Wrath? Lift up your eyes Chriſtians, and look through the land Eaſtward, and Weſtward, Northward, and Southward, and tell me what you ſee? Behold a flood commeth, a flood of ſin is already broken forth upon us, the fountains of the great deeps are broken up, and the windows of Hell are opened, *&c.* *In ſuch an Evil day as this is, happy is the ſoul that hath made God its refuge, even the moſt high God its habitation. He ſhall ſit* Noah *like,* Mediis tranquillus in undis, *ſafe from the fear of evil: In conſideration of the diſtreſs of many unprovided ſouls for the miſery that is coming on them, and not knowing how ſhort my uſeful time will be to any (for I know it cannot be long) I have endeavored once more the aſſiſtance of poor Chriſtians in theſe two ſmall Treatiſes, one of* Fear, *the other of* Preparation *for the worſt times, which it may be is the laſt help I ſhall this way be able to afford them. It is therefore my earneſt requeſt to all that fear the*

Mr. R. A. *Of Godly Fear. page* 19.

Lord,

Lord, and tremble at his word, to redeem their time with double diligence, because the days are evil. To clear up their interest in Christ and the promises, least the darkness of their Spiritual estate, meeting with such a night of outward darkness overwhelmed them with terrors insupportable. Some help is offered in this Treatise to direct the gracious soul to its rest in God. May the blessing of his Spirit accompany them, and bless them to the Soul of him that Readeth. It will be matter of joy beyond all earthly joys to the heart of,

Thy Friend and Servant

in Christ,

John Flavel

THE

THE *RIGHTEOUS* MANS REFUGE, &c.

Iſaiath 26. *v.* 20.

Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and ſhut thy doors about thee; hide thy ſelf as it were for a little moment till the indignation be over-paſt.

CHAP. I.

Wherein the literal, and real importance of the Text are conſidered, the Doctrine propounded, and the method of the following diſcourſe ſtated.

SECT. I.

MAN being a prudent and proſpecting Creature, can never be ſatisfied with preſent ſafety; except he may alſo ſee himſelf well ſecured againſt future dangers. Upon all appearances of trouble, 'tis natural to him to ſeek a refuge that he may be able to *Shun* what he is loath to *Suffer*, and ſurvive thoſe calamities which will ruine the defenceleſs and expoſed multitude.

multitude. Natural men ſeek refuge in natural things. *The rich mans wealt his his ſtrong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit,* Prov. 18. 11. *Hypocrites* make lies their refuge, and under falſhood do they hide themſelves, *Iſa.* 28. 15. Not doubting but they ſhall ſtand dry and ſafe, when the overflowing flood lays all other under water; But,

Godly men make GOD himſelf their hiding place, to him they have ſtill betaken themſelves in all ages, as often as calamities have befallen the world, *Pſal.* 46. 1. *God is our refuge and ſtrength a very preſent help in trouble.* As Chickens run under the wings of the Hen for ſafety, when the the Kit hovers over them, ſo do they fly to their God for ſanctuary, *Pſal.* 56. 3. *At what time I am afraid, I will truſt in thee. q. d.* Lord, if a ſtorm of trouble at any time overtake me, I will make bold to come under thy roof for ſhelter, and indeed not ſo bold as welcome; 'tis no preſumption in them, after ſo gracious an invitation from their God, *Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers.*

My friends, a ſound of trouble is in our ears, the clouds gather and blacken upon us more and more: Diſtreſs of Nations with perplexity ſeems to be near, our day haſtens to an end, and the ſhaddows of the night are ſtretching forth upon us. What greater ſervice therefore can I do for your ſouls, than by the light of this Scripture (as with a Candle in my hand) to lead you to your Chambers, and ſhew you your Lodgings in the Attributes and pomiſes of God,

before

before I take my leave of you, and bid you good night.

O with what satisfaction should I part with you, were I but sure to leave you under Christs wings! It was Christs lamentation over *Jerusalem*, that they would not be gathered under his wings, when the *Roman* Eagle was ready to hover over that City; and you know how dear they paid for their obstinacy and infidelity. Be warned by that dreadful example, & among the rest of your mercies bless God heartily for this, That so sweet a voice sounds from Heaven in your ears this day, this day of frights and troubles: *Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers*, &c

This Chapter contains a lovely song fitted for the lips of Gods *Israel*, notwithstanding their sad captivity; for their God was with them in *Babylon*, and heard their hearts there with many promises of deliverance, and in the mystical sense, it relates to the New Testament Churches, of whose troubles, protections, & deliverances, the *Jews* in *Babylon* were a *Type*.

1. This Chapter though full of excellent and seasonable truths, will be too long to Analize; it shall suffice to search back only to the 17 *verse* where you find the poor captivated Church under dispondency of mind, comparing her condition to that of a woman in travil, who hath many sharp pains, and bitter throws, yet cannot be delivered, much like that in 2 *Kings* 19. 3. *The children are come to the birth, and there is no strength to bring forth*,

Against this discouragement a double relief is

is applyed in the following Verſes, the one is a *Promiſe* of full deliverance at laſt; the other an *Invitation* into a ſure Sanctuary and place of defence for preſent, until the time of their full deliverance came. The promiſe we have in *v.* 19. *Thy dead men ſhall live, together with my dead body ſhall they ariſe; awake and ſing ye that dwell in the duſt, &c.* Their captivity was a civil death, and *Babylon* as a grave to them. So it is elſewhere diſcribed, *Ezek.* 37. *v.* 1, 3, 12. *I will open your graves and cauſe you to come up out of your graves and bring you into the land of Iſrael.* And therefore their deliverance is carried under the notion of a reſurrection in that Promiſe.

Objection. Yea, (might they reply) the hopes of deliverance at laſt is ſome *comfort*, but alas, that may be far off: How ſhall we ſubſiſt till then?

Sol. Well enough, for as you have in that promiſe a ſure ground of deliverance at laſt, ſo in the interim here is a gracious Invitation into a place of ſecurity for the preſent, *Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers.* In which invitation four things call for our cloſe attention.

1. The *Form* of the invitation, including in it the qualified ſubject, *Come my plople.* Gods own peculiar people, who have choſen God for their portion, and reſigned up themſelves ſincerely to him in the Covenant, are the perſons here invited, the ſame which he before called the righteous nation that kept the truth, *verſe* 2. he means thoſe that remained faithful to God, (as many of them did) in *Babylon*, witneſs their ſorrow for *Sion*, *Pſal.* 137. *per totum*; and their

ſolemn

ſolemn appeal to *God* that their hearts were not turned back, nor had their ſteps declined though they were ſore broken in the place of Dragons, and covered with the ſhadow of death, *Pſ.* 44. 18, 19, 20. Theſe are the people invited to the chambers of ſecurity. And the form of invitation is full of tender compaſſion, *Come my people*; like a tender father that ſees a ſtorm coming upon his children in the fields, and takes them by the hand, Come away my dear children haſte home with me leſt the ſtorm *overtake* you; or as the Lord ſaid to *Noah* before the Deluge, Come thou and all thy houſe into the Ark, and God ſhut him in, *Gen.* 7. 1, 16. This is the form of the invitation, *Come my people.*

The priviledge invited to; *Enter thou into thy chambers*, There is ſome variety, and indeed variety rather than contrariety in the expoſition of theſe words.

In this all are agreed, that by their Chambers, is not meant the Chambers of their own houſes; for alas, their houſes were left unto them deſolate; and if not, yet they could be no ſecurity to them now, when neither their own houſes, nor their fortified city was able to defend them before. *Ezek.* 21. 14.

Grotius exponds it of the Grave, and makes theſe Chambers the ſame with the Chambers of death. *Ite in cubicula, h. e. ſepulchra veſtra.* The grave indeed is a place of ſecurity where God ſometimes hides ſome of his people in troubleſome times, as is plain, in *Iſa.* 57. 1, 2. but I cannot *Grot. in loc.*

allow

allow this to be the ſenſe of this Text, God doth not comfort his captives with a natural againſt a civil death, but with protection in their troubles upon earth, as is evident from the ſcope of the whole Chapter.

By Chambers therefore, others underſtand the chambers of Divine providence, where the Saints are hid in evil days. So our *Annotators* on the place, and no doubt but this is in part the ſpecial intendment of the Text.

Others underſtand the *Attributes* and *Promiſes* of God to be here meant, as well as his providences. And I conceive all three make the ſenſe of the Text full, (*i.e.*) the Divine Attributes engaged in the promiſes, and exerciſed or actuated in the providences of God; theſe are the ſanctuaries and refuges of God: people in dayes of trouble.

Calvin underſtands it of the quiet repoſe of the Believers mind in God, but that is rather the effect of his ſecurity, than the place of it. It's Gods Attributes or his name (which is the ſame thing) to which the righteous fly and are ſafe, *Prov* 18. 10.

Ob. But you will ſay, why are they called *their chambers*? thoſe attributes are not theirs, but *Gods*

Sol. The anſwer is eaſie, though they be Gods Properties, yet they are his peoples priviledges, and benefits; for when God makes over himſelf to them in Covenant to be their God, he doth as it were deliver to them the keys of all his Attributes for their benefit and ſecurity; and is as if he ſhould ſay, my wiſdom is yours, to contrive

trive for your good; my power is yours, to protect your persons; my mercy yours, to forgive your sins; my all-sufficiency yours, to supply your wants; all that I am, and all that I have is for your benefit and comfort. These are the Chambers provided for the Saints lodgings, and into these they are invited to enter. *Enter thou into thy chambers.* By entring into them understand their actual faith exercised in acts of affiance, and resignation to God in all their dangers. So *Psal.* 56. 3. *At what time I am afraid* (said *David*) *I will trust in thee.* (*q. d.*) Lord, if a Storm come, I will make bold to shelter my self from it under thy wings by faith; look as unbelief shuts the doors of all Gods Attributes and Promises against us; so faith opens them all to the Soul, and so much of the priviledge invited to, which is the second thing.

3. We have here a needful caution for the securing of this priviledge to our selves in evil times, *shut thy doors about thee.* Or [illegible] the *Syriack* renders behind or after thee, (*i.e.*) saith *Calvin, Diligenter cavendum ne ulla rimula diabolo ad nos pateat.* Care must be taken that no passage be left open to the Devil to creep in after us and drive us out of our refuge, for so it falls out too often with Gods people, when they are at rest in Gods name or promises, *Satan* creeps in by unbelieving doubts and puzling objections, and beats them out of their refuge back again into trouble: it is therefore of great concernment in such times especially, *not to give place to the devil,* as the phrase is, *Eph.* 4. 17.

But

but cleave to God by a resolved reliance.

4. Lastly, we are to note with what Arguments or motives they are prest to betake themselves to this refuge. There are two found in the Text, the one working upon their *fear*, the other upon their *hope*.

1. That which works upon their *fear*, is a supposition of a storm coming, the indignation of God will fall like a tempest; this is supposed in the Text, and plainly expressed in the words following, *For the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth*, ver. 21.

2. The other is fitted to work upon their *hope* though his indignation fall like a Storm, yet it will not continue long; it shall be but for a moment, better days and more comfortable dispensations will follow. From all which the general observation is this.

Doctrine.

That the Attributes, Promises, and Providences of God are the Chambers of rest and security, in which his people are to hide themselves, when they foresee the storms of his indignation coming upon the world.

The name of the Lord (saith *Solomon*) *is a strong Tower; the righteous run into it, and are safe*, *Pro.* 18. 10. And his Attributes are his name, *Exod.* 34. 5. For by them he is known as a man is known by his name, and this his name is a strong Tower for his peoples security; now what is the use and end of a Tower in a City, but to receive and secure the Inhabitants when

the outworks are beaten to the ground, the walls scaled, and the houses left desolate?

And as it is here resembled to a Tower, so in *Isa.* 33. 16. Its shadowed out unto us by a munition of rocks, *His place of defence shall be a munition of rocks.* How secure is that person that is environed with rocks one every side? Yea you will say, but yet a rock is but a cold and barren refuge, though other enemies cannot, yet hunger and thirst can invade and kill him there. No, in this rock is a store-house of provision; as well as a magazine for defence; so it follows, *Bread shall be given him and his water shall be sure.*

And sometimes it is resembled to us by the wings of a fowl, spread with much tenderness over her young for their defence, *Psal.* 57. 1. *Yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge until these calamities be over past.* So *Psal.* 17. 8. *Keep me as the apple of thine eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings.* No part of the body hath more guards upon it, than the apple of the eye. God is as careful to preserve his people, as men are to preserve their eyes; *and he that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eyes.* But we need not go from one Metaphor to another, to shew you where the Saints refuge is in time of danger, you have a whole bundle of them lying together in that one Scripture, *Psal.* 18. 2. *The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my strength in whom I will trust, my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.* Where you find all kind of defence, whether

whether natural, or artificial, under a pleaſant variety of apt Metaphors, aſcribed to God for the ſecurity of his people.

Now for the caſting of this great point into as eaſie and profitable a Method as I can; I ſhal reſolve this general truth into theſe following Propoſitions, which are implied or expreſſed in the Text and Doctrine thence deduced; and the firſt is this.

1. Propoſition.

That there are times and ſeaſons appointed by God for the pouring out of his indignation upon the world.

2. Propoſition.

That Gods own people are concerned in, and ought to be affected with thoſe Judgements.

3. Propoſition.

That God hath a ſpecial and particular care of his people in the dayes of his indignation.

4. Propoſition.

That God uſually premoniſhes the world, eſpecially his own people, of his Judgements before they befall them.

5. Propoſition.

That Gods Attributes, Promiſes, and Providences are prepared for the ſecurity of his people, in the greateſt diſtreſſes that befal them in the world.

6. Propoſition.

That none but Gods people are taken into theſe chambers of ſecurity, or can expect his ſpecial protection in evil times.

And then I ſhall apply the whole in the proper uſes of it.

CHAP. II.

Demonſtrating the firſt Propoſition, That there are times and ſeaſons appointed by God for the pouring out of his indignation upon the world.

SECT. I.

THIS is plainly implyed in the Text, that there are times of indignation appointed to befal the world; yea, and more than this; not only that ſuch times ſhall come, but the duration and continuance is alſo under an appointment; *Hide thy ſelf for a little moment, until the indignation be overpaſt.* The Prophet tells us in *Zeph.* 2. 2. that theſe Stormy times are under a decree, and that decree is there compared to a pregnant Woman which is to go out her appointed months, and then to travel and bring forth: Even ſo it is in the judgements GOD brings upon the world. We ſee them not in the dayes of provocation, *ſed adhuc fœtus in utero latet*, but all this while it is in the womb of the decree, and at the appointed ſeaſon they ſhall become viſible to the world. As there are in Nature fair Halcyon days, and cloudy, overcaſt, and ſtormy: So 'tis in providences, *Eccleſ.* 7. 14. *God hath ſet one over againſt*

againſt the other. Yea, one is the occaſion of the other; for look as the Sun in a hot day exhales abundance of vapours from the Earth, and ſea, theſe occaſion ſhowers, thunder, and tempeſts, and thoſe again clear the Air, and diſpoſe it to fair weather again. So it is here, Proſperity is the occaſion of abundance of ſin, this brings on adverſity from the juſtice of God to correct it; adverſity being ſanctified, humbles, reforms, and purges the People of God, and this again by mercy procures their proſperity: So you find the account ſtated in *Pſal.* 107. 17. *Fools becauſe of their iniquities are afflicted, then they cry to the Lord in their troubles, and he ſaveth them out of their diſtreſſes.*

And this apointment of times of diſtreſs is both profitable and neceſſary for the world, eſpecially Gods own people in it.

In general, hereby the Beeing and righteouſneſs of God is cleared and vindicated againſt the Atheiſm and Infidelity of the world; *Pſal.* 9. 16. *The Lord is known by the Judgement that he executeth.* Impunity is the occaſion of many Atheiſtical thoughts in the world. *Jer.* 48. 11. *Moab hath been at eaſe from his youth, and he hath ſetled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from veſſel to veſſel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taſte remained in him, and his ſcent is not changed.* So *Pſal.* 55, 19. *Becauſe they have no changes therefore they fear not God.* Kingdoms, Families, and particular Perſons, like ſtanding waters and ponds, are apt to corrupt by long continued peace and proſperity; the Lord

therefore ſees it neceſſary to purge the world by his judgements; *When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteouſneſs.* Thoſe Sermons that God preaches from heaven by the terrible voice of his judgements, ſtartle and rouze the ſecure world, more than all the warnings and exhortations of his Miniſters could ever do: Thoſe that ſlept ſecurely under our Miniſtry, will fear and tremble under his rods; thoſe that are without faith are not without ſenſe and feeling, their own eyes will affect their hearts, though our words could make no impreſſion on them.

SECT. II.

BUt of what uſe ſoever theſe National Judgements are to others, to be ſure they ſhall be beneficial to Gods own people; when others die by fear, they ſhal live by faith: If they be baneful poiſon to the wicked, they ſhall be healthful phyſick to the Godly. For,

1. By theſe calamities God will mortifie and purge their corruptions; this Winter weather ſhall be uſeful to deſtroy and rot thoſe rank weeds, which the Summer of proſperity bred, *Iſa.* 27. 9. *By this therefore ſhall the iniquity of Jacob be purged.* Phyſick in its own nature is gripping and unpleaſant; but very uſeful and neceſſary to purge the body from noxious and malignant humors, which retained may put life it ſelf in hazard; and it is with the body Politick, as with the body Natural.

2. Na-

2. National Judgements drive the people of God nearer to him, and one to another; they drive the people of GOD to their knees, and make them pray more frequently, more fervently, and more feelingly than they were wont to do; in this posture you find them, in *ver.* 8, 9. of this Chapter: *Yea, in the way of thy judgments O Lord, have we waited for thee, the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early.*

3. In a word, by these distractions and distresses of Nations, the people of God are more weaned from the world, and made to long more vehemently after heaven; being now convinced by experience that this is not their rest. When all things are tranquil and prosperous, Gods own people are but too apt to fall asleep and dream of pleasure and rest on earth, to say as *Job* in his prosperity, *I shall die in my nest, I shall multiply my days as the sand.* And then are their heads and hearts filed with manie projects and designs: to promote their comforts, and make provision for their accommodations on earth: The multiplicity of earthly cares and comforts take up their time and thoughts too much, and make them that they mind death and eternity too little. But saith God, this must not be so, things must not go on at this rate, the prosperous world must not thus enchant my people; I must imbitter the *earth* that I may thereby sweeten heaven the more to them; when they find no rest below, they will surely seek it above.

These, and such like are the gracious designs and ends of God in shaking the world by his terrible Judgments; but yet, though National troubles must necessarily come, the wisest of men cannot positively determine the precise time of those judgements; we may indeed by the signs of the times discern their near approach; yet our judgment can be but probable and conjectural, seing there are tacite conditions in the dreadfullest threatnings, *Jer.* 18. 7,8. *Jonah* 3.9,10. And such is the mercifull nature of God, that he oft times turns away his anger from his people, when it seems ready to pour down upon them, *psal.* 78. 38. The consideration whereof no way indulges security, but encourages to repentance, and greater fervency in Prayer.

CHAP. III.

Opening and confirming the second Proposition, viz. That Gods own people are much concerned in, and ought to be suitably affected with, those Judgements that befal the Nation wherein they live.

SECT. I.

IF Gods people have no concernment in these things, why are they called upon in this Text,

to

to run into their chambers, hide themſelves, and ſhut their doors, till the indignation be overpaſt? Certainly though God hath better provided for them than others, yet they are two ways concerned in theſe caſes as much as others. *viz.*

1. Upon a Political Account.
2. Upon a Religious

1. Upon a Political account, as they are members of the commuñity, and ſo are equally concerned in the good or evil that befal the Nation in which they live, their Cabbins muſt follow the fate of the Ship in which they Sail, their Lives, Liberties, Eſtates, and Intereſt ſink and ſwim with the publick. The good figs were carried away with the bad, *Ier.* 24. 5. In theſe outward reſpects it often times bears as hard upon the righteous as upon the wicked. *Ezek.* 21. 3. *I will draw forth my ſword out of his ſheath, and will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked.* In theſe outward reſpectes as it is with the good, ſo with the ſinner, *Eccleſ.* 9. 2. The ſame fire that burns the dry tree, oftentimes burnes the green tree too, *Ezek.* 20. 47. Grace is above all hazards, but creature enjoyments and comforts are not. The ſins of the *Sodomites* involve not only their own houſes and eſtates, but *Lots* alſo, in the ruine and overthrow; wicked men often fare the better for the company of the godly, and the godly often fare the worſe for the company of the wicked.

And it is not to be wondered at, if we conſider that even the Saints themſelves have an hand in the provocation of theſe Judgments, as well as others, *Deut.* 32. 19. *And when the Lord ſaw it he abhorred them, becauſe of the provoking of his ſons and of his daughters.* We have contributed to the common heap-guilt, and therefore muſt juſtifie God if we partake with others in the common calamity.

2. They are greatly concerned in ſuch Judgments upon a Religious and Chriſtian account, for it is uſual for the floud of Gods judgements not only to ſweep away our civil and natural, but our ſpiritual and beſt enjoyments and comforts. Thus the Ordinances of God ceaſed in *Babylon*, and there the faithful bewailed their miſery upon that account, *Pſ.* 137. *per totum; we wept when we remembred thee, O Zion.* Not only *Iſrael* flies, but the *Ark* is taken priſoner by the enemy, 1 *Sam.* 4. 11. And yon find the people of God more deeply concerned upon this account, than for all their outward loſſes and other ſufferings, *Zeph.* 3. 18. *I will gather them of thee that are ſorrowful for the Solemn aſſemblies, to whom the reproach of it was a burthen.* For by how much our ſouls are more excellent than our bodies, and the concerns of Eternity over ballance thoſe of time; by ſo much more are we concerned in the loſs of our ſpiritual, more than of our temporal mercies and enjoyments.

Grace indeed cannot be loſt, but the means and inſtruments by which it is begotten may; the golden candleſtick is one of the moveables

in

in Gods houſe, *Rev.* 2. 5.

Thus you ſee a twofold concernment that the people of God have in the effects of National Judgments.

SECT. II.

THis being ſo, how ſhould all that fear God be affected with the appearances and ſigns of his indignation? So was *David*, *Pſal.* 119. 120. *My fleſh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.* He that feared not a Bear, a Lyon, a *Goliah*, yet trembleth at Gods judgements. So did *Habakkuk*, *chap.* 3. *v.* 16. *When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenneſs entered into my bones.* Expreſſions denoting the deepeſt ſeizures of fear and greateſt conſternations; not that I would perſwade you to ſuch ſlaviſh fear, or unchriſtian dejection, as it is not only ſinful in it ſelf, but the cauſe and inlet of many other ſins: But to a due ſenſe both of the evils of miſery that will befal the Nation when GODS indignation comes upon it; and the evils of ſin that have incenſed it; and to ſuch a fear of both as may ſeaſonably awaken us, to the uſe of all preventing remedies. And firſt,

1. O that all would lay to heart the National miſeries that GODS indignation threatens upon us. It is ſaid, *Pſalm* 107. 34. *A fruitful land is turned into barrenneſs for the wickedneſs of them that dwell therein.* It was long ſince told *England* by one of its faithful Watchmen. (*Mr. Strong.*) 'The Nation and Church in which

'We

'we are, is the common Ship in which we are 'all embarked, and if this in judgement 'be cast away, whether dashed against the rocks 'of any Forreign power, or swallowed up in 'the quick-sands of Domestick divisions, it 'must needs hazard all the Passengers: Or if 'you were sure, that for your parts you might 'be safe; would it not be a bitter thing, to stand 'upon the shore, and see such a glorious vessel 'as this Nation is, to be cast away? To see 'this glorious Land defaced, the blessed Gospel 'polluted, the golden candlestick removed, 'it cannot but affect men that have any bowels.

'Or if this move you not, yet to see a stran-'ger to Lord it in thy habitation, and thy 'dwelling place to cast thee out; for your de-'lightsome dwellings, your fruitful, pleasant, 'and well tilled fields to be made a prey; for 'you to sow, and another to reap, *Impius hæc 'seges*; for the delicate Women upon whom 'the wind must not blow, to be exposed to the 'lust and cruelty of an enemy, and be glad to 'fly away naked to prolong a miserable life, 'which they would be glad to part with for 'death, were it not for fear of the exchange. 'For the tender Mother to look upon the child 'of her Womb; and consider, must this child 'in whom I have placed the hope of my age; for,

Omnis in Ascanio stat chari cura parentis;

'He that hath been so tenderly bred up, must 'he fall into the rough hands of a bloudy Soul-'dier, skilful to destroy. It had been well 'for me if God had given me dry breasts, or a

'mis-

'miſcarrying womb; rather than to bring forth 'children unto murtherers; or if you might be 'ſafe, how could you endure to ſee the miſe-'ries that ſhould come upon your people, and 'the deſtruction of your kindred. Thus far he. But alas! What ſecurity have any of us as to our earthly comforts from the common calamitie? We may pleaſe our ſelves as *Baruch* did, *Jer.* 45. 4, 5. and dream of exemption, but by ſo much the greater will our diſtreſs be, when it ſhall ſurprize us.

2. You that are the people of God ought to be deeply affected with the ſpiritual miſeries that threaten us in the day of Gods indignation: do you conſider what the removing the Candleſtick out of its place is! A departing Goſpel, the going down of the Sun upon the Prophets, the loſs of your ſweet Sabbaths, and Goſpel-Feaſts, and the groſs darkneſs of Popery to fill the earth: O it is hard parting with theſe things, it's ſaid, 1 *Sam.* 7. 2. when the *Ark* was removed, *that all the houſe of Iſrael lamented after the Lord.* Pity your own Souls, and be deeply affected with the miſery of others, the poor Chriſtleſs world, who are like to periſh for want of Viſion, *Prov.* 29. 18. In the Year 1072. ſaith *Matthew Paris*, Preaching was ſuppreſſed at *Rome*, and then Letters were framed by ſome as coming from hell; in which the Devil gives them thanks for the multitude of Souls ſent to him that year.

3. But eſpecially labour to affect your hearts with the ſins that have incenſed Gods indignation

on: So did the Saints in *Jeruſalem*, Ezek. 9: 4: they ſighed and mourned for all the abominations committed in it. So did Lot, 2 Pet. 2. 7. *He vexed his righteous ſoul from day to day.* So did *David*, Pſal. 119. 136. *Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, becauſe men kept not thy law.* O who that loves God can refrain tears, to ſee the God of pity, the God of tender mercies, a father full of bowels of compaſſion, ſo incenſed and provoked to indignation! Oh it is an heart melting conſideration where there is any ingenuity. If our afflictions grieve God to the heart as it doth, Judg. 10. 16. Our ſouls ſhould be grieved for his diſhonour.

4. To conclude, get upon your hearts ſuch a ſenſe of Gods indignation as may quicken you to the uſe of preventing duties. So *Amos* 4. 12. *Becauſe I will do this prepare to meet thy God, O Iſrael.* So the Prophet, *Zeph.* 2. 1, 2. *Gather your ſelves together before the decree bring forth.* It was *Moſes* his honour to ſtand in the breach, Pſal. 106 23. And *Abraham's* to plead ſo with God, *though he did not prevail.*

CHAP. IV.

Confirming the third Propoſition. VIZ. *That God hath a ſpecial and peculiar care of his own in the dayes of his indignation.*

SECT. I.

PRopriety and Relation engages Care and Solicitude in time of Danger; we ſee God hath

hath put such a *Storge*, and inclination into the very creatures, that they will expose themselves to preserve their young; and it cannot be imagined that the fountain of Pity which dropt this tenderness into the bowells of the creatures, should not abound with it himself; is there such strong inclination in the very birds of the Air, that they will hazard their own lives to save their young? much more is God solicitous for his people, *Isa.* 31. 5. *As birds flying, &c.* to their nests when their young are in danger: So *will the Lord of Hosts defend Jerusalem.* No mother is more solicitous for her deareſt Child in danger and distress, than the Lord is for his people, *Isa.* 49. 15. *Can a Woman forget he sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.* A woman (the more affectionate Sex forget her child) a peece of her self, her sucking child, which together with milk form the breast draws love from the heart. This may rather be supposed, than that the Lord should forget his people.

Two things must here be cleared. 1. That it is so. 2. Why it is so.

1. That it is so, will appear from,

1. Scripture Emblems.
2. Scripture Promises.
3. Scripture Instances.

1. Scripture *Emblems*, and among many I will upon this occasion single out two or three principal

principal ones. In *Ezek.* 5. 1, 2, 3. *And thou ſon of man take thee a ſharp knife, take thee a Barbers razor, and cauſe it to paſs upon thy head and upon thy beard, then take the balances to weigh and divide the hair; thou ſhalt burn with fire a third part in the midſt of the City, when the dayes of the ſiege are fulfilled, and thou ſhalt take a third part, and ſmite about it with a knife, and a third part thou ſhalt ſcatter in the wind; and I will draw out a ſword after them: Thou ſhalt alſo take thereof a few in number, and bind them in thy skirts.* You find this truth ſhadowed out in this excellent Emblem; *Jeruſalem* the capital City is the head, the numerous inhabitants are the hair, the King of *Babylon* the Razor, the weighing it in balances, is the exactneſs of Gods procedure in Judgement with them, the fire, knife, and wind, are the various judgements to which the people were appointed; the hiding of a few in the Prophets skirt, is the care of God for the preſervation of his own remnant in the common calamity, this is one Emblem clearing this point. And then in *Ezek.* 9. 3, 4. the ſame truth is preſented to us in another Emblem, as livly and ſignificant as the former. *And behold, ſix men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a ſlaughter weapon in his hand, and one among them was cloathed in linnen with a writers inkhorn by his ſide, and they went in and ſtood before the brazen Altar; and the glorie of the God of Iſrael was gone up from the Cherub, whereupon he was, to the threſhold of his houſe, and he called to the man cloathed with linnen, which had the writ-*

ters

ters inkhorn by his side, And the Lord said unto him, go through the midest of the Citie, through the midst of Jerusalem, *and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh, and cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.* The men that had charge over the City are the *Angels* appointted for that Service, some with slaughter-weapons whose work it was to destroy, but one among them had a writers inkhorn by his side, and he was imployed to take the names, and mark the persons of Gods faithful ones among them, whom the Lord intended to preserve and hide in that common overthrow and desolation of the City, and these were to be all marked man by man before the destroying Angel was to begin his bloudy work. Oh see the tender care of God over his upright mourning servants! Once more, the same truth is represented in a third Emblem, *Mal.* 3. 17. *And they shall be mine, saith the* Lord, *in the day that I make up my jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.* Where the world is compared to an house on fire; God to the Master, and father of the family; the wicked to the useless number therein; the Saints to the children and jewels in the house; about these his first and principal care of preservation is exercised, these he will be sure to save, whatever become of the rest. Thus you have the chosen Emblems that illustrate this comfortable truth.

2 As these Scripture Emblems illustrate it, so there are many excellent Scripture Promises to con-

confirm it, *Isa.* 32. 2. *a man shal be for an hiding place from the wind, & a covert from the tempest: as rivers of water in a dry place.* This man is the man Christ Jesus, the tempest spoken of, are the miseries and calamities of War, which make the land on which it falls, an hot, dry, and weary land; in the midst and rage whereof, Christ shall be to his faithful ones a covert or protection, a river of water for supply, and a shadow for refreshment; that is to say, whatsoever shall be necessary either for their safety or comfort. Christ is not only a shadow to his people from the wrath of God, but also from the rage of men. Again, *Zech.* 2. 5. *I will be a wall of fire round about.* Alluding to Travellers in the desart, who to prevent danger from wild beasts in the night, use to make a circular fire round about the place where they lie down to rest, and this fire was as a wall to secure them. You have the like gracious promise also made to the poor captived Church in *Ezek.* 11. 16. *Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and scattered them among the countreys, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countreys where they shall come.*

A little Sanctuary, the word is variously rendred and expounded. Some *Adverbially*, and render it (in *Hebrew*) *Paulisper*, a Sanctuary for a little while, *viz.* during their danger at the shortness of which this Adverb points, So *Junius.* Others *Adjectively*, as we translate it, *Templum paucorum*, as *Votablus*, there were but a handful of them, and God would be as a Sanctuary to secure and protect that remnant.

3. And

3. And all these promises have in all ages been faithfully fulfilled to the Saints; you have an excellent Scripture for this, 2 *Pet.* 2. 4, 5, 6. when the flood was brought upon the old world there was one *Noah* a righteous man in it, and for him God provided an Ark. When *Sodom* was overthrown, there was one *Lot* in it, a just man, and God secured him out of danger; upon which that comfortable conclusion is built, *ver.* 9. *The Lord knows how to deliver the godly.* When *Jerusalem* was destroyed, a *Pella* was provided as a refuge for the godly there. Remarkable is that place to this purpose, *Isa.* 25. 4. *Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible one is as a storm against the wall.* And this hath God been not only once or twice; but in all ages, *Psal.* 90. 1. *Lord thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.* Or as the Hebrew, in generations, and generations. What he hath been in former generations to his distressed people, that he is, and will be without alteration in all generations.

SECT. II.

YET we must remember, that all who are preserved in common calamities are not the people of God; nor are all that are indeed his people preserved: He hath people enough to divide into two ranks, as the Husbandman his corn, some for the mill, and some to reserve

ſerve for ſeed. There be ſtars enough in the heaven to ſhine in both *Hemiſpheres*, and there are Saints enough in the world, ſome to ſhine in heaven, and ſome to preſerve the Church on earth.

1. All that are preſerved are not the people of God; in the Ark a wicked *Cham* was preſerved; and thoſe that were preſerved in *Egypt*, many of them were afterwards deſtroyed for their unbelief, *Jud.* 5. So in *Ezekiel's* viſion, a part even of thoſe heirs which were ſpared, were afterwards caſt into the fire, *Ezek.* 5. 4. Preſervation from the dominion of ſin, and the wrath to come, is peculiar to Gods own people; but as for temporal deliverances we cannot infer that concluſion.

2. Nor yet can we ſay that all Gods people ſhall be preſerved; that promiſe *Zeph.* 2. 3. leaves it upon *a may be*, many a precious Chriſtian hath fallen in the common calamity, they have been preſerved in, but not from trouble.

But it is uſual with God to preſerve ſome in the ſoreſt judgements: and the grounds of it are,

1. Becauſe, ſome muſt be left as a ſeed to propagate and preſerve the Church, which is perpetual and can never fail; he never ſo overthrows Nations, as *Sodom* was overthrown, *Iſa.* 1. 9. this was the ground of that promiſe, *Jer.* 30. 11. *For I am with thee, ſaith the* Lord, *to ſave thee, though I make a full end of all nations, whither I have ſcattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee.* And of that Plea, *Amos* 7. 2. *O Lord*

God

God, forgive I beſeech thee; by whom ſhall Jacob ariſe? for he is ſmall. Except the Lord had left a ſmall remnant, we had been as *Sodom*. Remarkable to this purpoſe, is that Scripture, *Iſa.* 6. 13. *But yet in it ſhal be a tenth, and it ſhal return, and ſhal be eaten: As a Teyl-tree, and as an Oak whoſe ſubſtance is in them, when they caſt their leaves. So the holy ſeed ſhal be the ſubſtance thereof.* This preſerved remnant is the holy ſeed, by which the Church is propagated and continued, *Pſal.* 102. 28.

2. Becauſe, God will even in this World own and reward the fears and ſorrows of his people for the ſins of the times, and ſufferings of the Church, with the joy and comfort of better times, and a participation of *Sions* conſolation; ſo *Iſa:* 66: 10: *Rejoice ye with Jeruſalem, ye that have mourned for her.* They that have ſown in tears, do ſometimes live to reap in joy, *Pſalm* 125. 6. they ſhall ſay as *Iſaiah* 25. 9. *Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he is come to ſave us.* And thoſe that live not to reap down in this world the harveſt of their own Prayers and tears, ſhall be no loſers; a full and better reward ſhall be given them in heaven, *Iſaiah* 57. 22.

3. Becauſe the preſerved remnant of Saints are they that muſt actually give unto God the glory of all his providential adminiſtrations in the world, both of judgements and mercies upon others, and towards themſelves. *They that go down to the pit do not celebrate his praiſe, the living, the living they praiſe him, Iſa.* 38. 18, 19.

Thus

Thus when God turned back *Sion's* captivity, the Remnant of Saints that were preſerved, were they that recorded his praiſe, *Pſal.* 126. 1, 2. *Then was our mouth filled with laughter.* And fully to this ſenſe is that Scripture, *Pſal.* 102. 19, 20, 21. *He delivers thoſe that are appointed to death,* (*i. e.*) That men had doomed to death, *That they may declare the name of the* Lord, *in Sion, and his praiſe in* Jeruſalem.

4. The hiding of the Saints in evil days, is the greateſt diſcovery of the hand of GOD in the world; when he *hides* them he *ſhews* himſelf, and that, both to the Saints and to their enemies.

It is one of the moſt glorious myſteries of providence that ever the world beheld, *viz.* the ſtrange and wonderful protection of poor helpleſs Chriſtians from the rage and fury of their mighty and malicious enemies; though they walk viſibly among them, yet they are, as it were, hid from their hands, but not from their eyes. So *Jer.* 1. 18. You find God made that Prophet among the envious Princes, and againſt an enraged and mighty King, *As a defenced City, and as an iron pillar, and as a brazen wall.* And indeed it was eaſier to them to conquer and take in the ſtrongeſt Fort or Gariſon, than that ſingle Perſon, who yet walked day by day naked and open among them. So *Luther* a poor Monk was made invincible, all the Papal power could not touch him, for God hid him. All the world againſt one *Athanaſius*, and yet not able to deſtroy him: for God hid him.

This

This is the display of the glorious power of God in the world, and he hath much honour by it.

Well then, if there be a God that takes care of his own in evil dayes, do not you be distractingly careful what shal become of you in such times; you cannot see how it is possible for you to escape, but 2 *Pet.* 2. 4, 5, 6. the Lord knows how to deliver when you do not. Little did *Lot* know the way and manner of his preservation, till God opened it to him; nor *Noah* till GOD contrived it for him: There was no way to be contrived by them for escape. He that knew how to deliver them, can deliver you also.

Leave your selves to Gods dispose; it shall certainly be to your advantage; the Church is his peculiar care, *Isa.* 27. 3. *I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.*

The more you commit your selves to his care the more you engage it, *Isa.* 26. 3. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee.* He will certainly find a place of safety for his people under or in Heaven.

Neither be too much dejected when the number of visible professors seems but small, think not that the Church will perish, when it is brought so low: This was *Elijah's* case, he thought he had been left alone, that Religion had been preserved in his single person, as the *Phœnix* of the world; but see 1 *Kings* 19. 18 God hath enough left if we were in our grave to continue Religion in the world, it concerns him more than you to look to that.

CHAPS

CHAP. V.

Evincing the fourth Propoſition, viz. *That God uſually premoniſheth the World, eſpecially his own of his judgements before they befal them.*

SECT. I.

GOD firſt warns, and then ſmites, he delights not to ſurprize men when indignation was coming, he tells his people of it in the Text, and admoniſheth them to hide themſelves. *Surely the Lord will do nothing but he revealeth his ſecrets to his ſervants the* Prophets, *Amos* 3. 7. Thus when the flood was to come upon the old world, he gave them one hundred and twenty years warning of it, *Gen.* 6. 3. compared with 1 *Pet.* 3. 19. So when *Sodom* was to be deſtroyed, God would not hide it from *Abraham*, *Gen.* 18. 17. *Shall I hide from* Abraham *the thing that I do?* The like diſcovery was made unto *Lot*, *Gen.* 19. 12, 13, 14. So when the Captivity was at hand, *Ezekiel* was commanded to give the *Jews* ſolemn warning of it from GOD, *Ezek.* 3. 17. *Hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.*

And when their City and Temple was to be deſtroyed by the *Romans*, how plainly did Chriſt foretel them of it by his own mouth, *Luke* 19. 43, 44. *Thine enemies ſhall caſt a Trench about thee,*

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and compaſs thee round and keep thee in on every ſide, and ſhall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, and they ſhall not leave thee one ſtone upon another; becauſe thou knewеſt not the time of thy viſitation. *Joſephus* alſo tells us that a little before the execution of this judgement upon them, a voice was heard in the temple, *Migremus hinc*, let us go hence, which voice *Tacitus* alſo in his Annals, mentions, *Audita major humana vox, excedere Deos, ſimul ingens motus excedentium*, It was more than an humane voice, telling them God was departing from them, and withal there was heard the ruſhing noiſe as of ſome that were going out of the Temple. *Joſephus de bel. Jud. lib. 7. c. 2. Tac. lib. 21.*

And as there were extraordinary premonitions of approaching judgements by revelation to the Prophets of old, and ſigns from heaven; ſo there ſtill are ſtanding and ordinary rules by which the world may be admoniſhed of GODS judgements before they come upon them.

And the general rule, by which men may diſcern the indignation of God before it comes, is ¶ this; *When the ſame provocations, and evils are found in one Nation, which have brought down the wrath of God upon another nation; that is an evident ſign of Gods judgement at the door.* For God is unchangeably, holy, and juſt, and will not favour that in one people, which he hath puniſhed in another; nor bleſs that in one age, which he hath curſed in another. And therefore that which hath been a ſign of Judgment to one, muſt be ſo to all.

Here it is that the carcases of those sinners whose sins had cast them away, are as it were cast up upon the Scripture shore, ora warning to all others that they steer not the same ill course they did. 1 *Cor.* 10. 6. *Now these things were our examples.* The *Israelites* are made examples to us, plainly intimating that if we tread the same path, we must expect the same punishment. Let us therefore consider what were the evils that provoked Gods judgements against his ancient people, whom he was so loth to give up, *Hos.* 11. 8. and so long ere he did give up, *Jer.* 15. 6. and we shall find by the concurrent accounts that the Prophets give,

1. That Gods worship among them was generally mixed and corrupted with their own inventions, for so it is said, *Psal.* 106. 40, 41, *they went a whoring with their own inventions.* And this so inflamed the warth of God, who is a jealous God, and tender over his own honour, that he abhorred his own inheritance; yea, he expresses himself as a man doth, whose heart is broken by the unfaithfulness of his wife, *Ezek.* 6. 9. Upon this account his professing people became the generation of his wrath, *Jer.* 7. 29, 30.

2. Incorrigible obstinacy under gentler correction, *Amos* 4. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. Scarcity, Mildews, Pestilence, and Sword had been upon them; and still these that remained, though saved as a brand out of the fire, in which their fellow sinners perished, would not return to God; and this hastened on the general ruine,

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ver. 12. This presages the ruine of Nations indeed.

3. Stupidity and Senselesness of Gods hand, was a sad Omen, and cause of that peoples ruine; So *Isa.* 26. 10, 11. *Lord when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see.* No nor yet when his hand is laid on, *Isa.* 42, 24, 25. It is not some small drop of Gods anger that passes without observation, but the *fury of his anger; not some light skirmish of his judgements with them, but the strength of battel:* Not in a corner upon some particular person, or family, but that which set him on fire round about; yet all this could not awaken *them. He hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battel, and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew it not, and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.* Prodigious stupidity! to be in the midst of flames, yea, to be seized by them, and destroyed sooner than awakened. So you find again in *Hos.* 7. 9: *Gray hairs were here and there upon* Ephraim, *yet he knew it not.* Youth and Age are easily distinguished, and gray hairs do plainly distinguish them, being the plain tokens of a declining State, yet they took no notice of them. Such stupidity is evermore the forerunner of misery.

4. Persecution of Gods faithful Ministers and people, was another forerunning sign of their ruine, 2 *Chron.* 36. 16. *They mocked the messengers of God, and dispised his words, and misused his Prophets until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.* There were also a number of upright Souls among them

that desired to worship GOD according to his own prescription, but a snare was laid for them in *Mizpah*, and a net spread upon *Tabor*; and therefore was judgement towards that people, *Hos.* 5. 1. *Mizpah* and *Tabor* were places in the way lying betwixt *Samaria* and *Jerusalem*, where the true worship of God was, and there were Informers or Spies set by the Priests to intercept such as would venture to serve God at Jerusalem according to his own prescription, this also foreboded the judgments of God upon that nation.

5. The decay of the life and power of Godliness among them plainly foreshewed their ruine at hand, *Hos.* 4. 18. *Their drink is sour*, where under the Metaphor of dead and sour drink which hath lost its spirit and is become flat; their formal, heartless, and perfunctory duties are severely taxed and condemned.

6. To conclude, the mutual animosities, and feuds among that professing people, evidently shewed judgement to be at the door, *Hos.* 9. 7. *The dayes of visitation are come, the days of recompence are come*; Israel *shall know it*: *the Prophet is a fool, the Spiritual man is mad, for the multitude of thine iniquity, and the great hatred.* This great hatred was one of the greatest sins, and saddest signs upon them. This Spirit of enmity sowed by the Devil among them hastened their calamitie. If *Ephraim* will envy *Judah*, and *Judah* vex *Ephraim* the common enemy shall part the fray: when the whole Nation was under water, and the *Roman* Armies under the very walls of

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Jerusalem, their own Historians tell us, what bitter contentions and sharp conflicts continued among them to the very last. These things must be looked upon by all wise and considerate Men, no otherwise than we look upon Glazing Meteors, and Blazing Comets, portending judgment and ruine at the door. We have had indeed terrible Signs in Heaven, a dreadful rod of God shaken over us of late, which all men ought to behold with trembling: Yet I must say those Moral Signs of judgement forementioned, are much more terrible and portentous. According therefore to the evidence of these signs among us, let all upright hearts be affected and awakened with expectations of Gods righteous judgements. It is indeed below faith to expect evil dayes with despondency and distraction; but surely it is a noble excercise of Faith so to expect them, as to make due preparation for them.

SECT. II.

AND if we enquire for what end God gives such warnings to the world, and premonishes them from Heaven, of the judgements that are coming on the earth, know that he doth it upon a threefold account.

1. To prevent their Execution.
2. To leave the Careless inexcusable.
3. To make them more tolerable and easie to his own people.

1. Warning is given with deſign to prevent the execution of judgements; this is plain from *Amos* 4. 12. *Therefore will* I *do this unto thee*; there is warning given; *and becauſe I will do this prepare to meet thy God, O Iſrael*: There is the gracious deſign of preventing it, by bringing them ſeaſonably upon their knees at the foot of an angry God: You ſee the Lord expects it from all his Children, that they may fall at his feet in deep humiliation, and fervent interceſſion when ever he goes forth in the way of judgement. What elſe was the deſign of GOD in ſending *Jonah* to *Nineveh* with that dreadful meſſage, but to excite them to repentance, and prevent their ruine? This *Jonah* guiſſed at, and therefore declined the meſſage to ſecure his credit, well knowing, that if they took warning and repented, the gracious nature of GOD would ſoon melt into compaſſion over them: Free grace wold make him appear as a liar among the people; for to that ſenſe his own words ſound, *Jonah* 4. 2. *was not this my ſaying, when I was yet in my Countrey; Therefore I fled before unto* Tarſhiſh, *for I knew that thou art a gracious God. q. d.* I thought before hand it would come to this, I knew how willing thou art to be prevented by repentance; therefore to ſecure my credit, I fled to *Tarſhiſh*.

2. He forewarns of judgments to leave the Incorrigible wholly inexcuſable, that thoſe who have neither ſenſe of Sin, nor fear of Judgment before, might have no cloak for their folly, nor plea for themſelves afterward; *What wilt*

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thou ſay when he ſhall puniſh thee? Jer. 13. 21, 22. *q. d.* What Plea or Apology is left thee after ſo many fair warnings? You cannot ſay you were ſurprized, before you were admoniſhed, or ruined before you were warned.

3. GOD warns of Judgements before they come, to make them the more eaſie to his people when they come indeed; thus in *John* 16. 4. Chriſt foretold his Diſciples of their approaching ſufferings, that when they came, they ſhould not be found amazed at them, or unprovided for them; for unexpected miſeries are aſtoniſhing to the beſt men, and deſtructive to wicked men, *Luke* 17. 26, 27, 28.

Well then if it be ſo, let all that are wiſe in heart conſider the Signs of the times, and ſeaſonably hearken to Gods warnings. *The Lords voice crieth to the City, and the man of wiſdom ſhall ſee thy name; hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it, Micah* 6. 9. 'Tis our wiſdom to waylay our troubles, and provide for the worſt eſtate, whilſt we enjoy the beſt: happy is he that is at once believing, and praying for goods days, and preparing for the worſt. *Noah*'s example is our advantage, *Heb.* 11. 7. *Who by faith, being warned of GOD of things not ſeen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark.* Preventing mercies are the moſt raviſhing mercies *Pſal.* 59. 10. And preventing calamities are the ſoreſt calamities, *Amos* 9. 10.

And let us heartily bewail the ſupineſs and careleſneſs of the world in which we live, who take no notice of Gods warnings, but put the

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evil day far from them, *Amos* 6. 3. who will admit no *fear*, till they are past all *hope*; they see God housing his Saints apace, yet will not see the evil to come from which *God* takes them, *Isa.* 57. 1, 2. *The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away none considering that the Righteous is taken away from the evil to come; he shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds each one walking in his uprightness.* They hear the cry of sin which is gone up to heaven, but cry not for the abominations that are committed, nor tremble at the judgements that they will procure.

O careless Sinners drowned in Stupidity, and sleeping like *Jonah* under the Hatches, when others are upon their knees and at their wits end! do Saints tremble, and are you secure? Have not you more reason to be afraid than they? If judgements come; the greatest harm it can do them, is but to hasten them to Heaven; but as for you, it may hurry you away to Hell: They only fear tribulation in the way; but you will not fear damnation in the end: Believe it Reader, in days of common calamity both Heaven and Hell will fill apace.

CHAP. VI.

Demonstrating the fifth Proposition, viz. That Gods Attributes, Promises, and Providences, are prepared for the security

rity of his people in the greateſt diſtreſſes that befall them in the World.

SECT. I.

HAving more briefly *diſpatched* the foregoing preliminary Propoſitions, it remains that we now more fully open this fifth Propoſition, which contains the main ſubject matter of this Diſcourſe; here therefore our meditations muſt fix and abide, and truely ſuch is the deliciouſneſs of the ſubject to Spiritual hearts, that I judge it wholly needleſs to offer any other motive beſides it ſelf to engage your affections. Let us therefore veiw our *Chambers*, and ſee how well God hath provided for his Children in all their diſtreſſes that befall them in this world; it is our fathers voice that calls to us, *Come my people, enter thou into thy Chambers.* And the

1. *Chambers.*

Which comes to be opened as a Refuge to diſtreſſed Believers in a ſtormy day, is that moſt ſecure and ſafe Attributes of *Divine Power*; into this let us firſt enter by ſerious and believing meditation, and ſee how ſafe they are whom God hides under the protection thereof in the worſt and moſt dangerous days. In opening this Attribute we ſhall conſider it,

1. In its own Nature and Property.
2. With reſpect to the Promiſes.

3. As it is actuated by Providence on the behalf of diſtreſſed Saints.

And then give you a comfortable proſpect of their ſafe and happy condition, who take up their lodgings by Faith in this Attribute of God.

1. Let us conſider the Power of God in it ſelf, and we ſhall find it repreſented to us in the Scriptures in theſe three lovely Properties, *viz.*

1. Omnipotent
2. Supreme Power.
3. Everla ſting

1. As an Omnipotent and All-ſufficient Power, which hath no bounds or limits, but the pleaſure and will of God, *Dan.* 4. 34, 35: *He doth according to his will in the armies of Heaven; and among the Inhabitants of the earth, and none can ſtay his hand, or ſay unto him, What doſt thou?* So *Pſalm* 135. 6. *Whatſoever the Lord pleaſed that did he, in Heaven, and in Earth, in the Seas, and all deep places,* You ſee Divine pleaſure is the only rule according to which Divine Power exerts it ſelf in the world; We are not therefore to limit and reſtrain it in our narrow and ſhallow thoughts, and to think in this or in that the Power of God may help or ſecure us; but to believe that he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think. Thus thoſe Worthies, *Dan.* 3. 17. by Faith exalted the power of God above the order and common rule of ſecond cauſes. *Our God whom we ſerve*

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is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King. Their faith reſting it ſelf upon the Omnipotent power of GOD, expected deliverance from it in an extraordinary way; 'tis *true*, this is no ſtanding rule for our faith ordinarly to work by; nor have we ground to expect ſuch miraculous Salvations, but yet whan extraordinary difficulties preſs us, and the common ways, and means of deliverance are ſhut up, we ought by faith to exalt the Omnipotency of God, by aſcribing the glory thereof to him, and leave our ſelves to his good pleaſure, without ſtraitning or nar owing his Almighty power, according to the *mold* of our poor low thoughts and apprehenſions of it: For ſo the Lord himſelf directeth our faith in difficult caſes. *Iſa.* 55. 8, 9. *For my thoughts, are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, ſaith the Lord, for as the heavens are higher than the earth; So are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.* He ſpeaks there of his pardoning mercy which he will not have his people to contract, and limit according to the model, and platform of their own deſponding, miſgiving & unbelieving thoughts; but to exalt and glorifie it, according to its unbounded fulneſs, as it is in the thoughts of God, the fountain of that mercy; ſo it ought to be with reſpect to his power, about which his thoughts and ours do vaſtly differ; the power of God as we caſt it in the mold of our thoughts, is as vaſtly different and diſproportionate from what it is in the thoughts of God the fountain thereof.

thereof; as the earth is to the heavens, which is but a ſmall inconſiderable point compared with them.

2. The power of God is a Supreme and Sovereign power, from which all creature power is derived, and by which it is over-ruled, reſtrained, and limited at his pleaſure, *Nebuchadnezzar* was a great Monarch, he ruled over other Kings, yet he held his Kingdom from God; it was God that placed not only the Crown upon his head, but his head upon his ſhoulders, *Dan.* 2. 37. *Thou, O King art a King of kings; for the God of Heaven hath given thee a Kingdom, power, and ſtrength, and glory.* Hence it follows, that no creature can move tongue or hand againſt any of Gods people, but by vertue of a Commiſſion or Permiſſion from their God, albeit they think not ſo. *Knoweſt thou not,* ſaith *Pilate* unto Chriſt, *that* I *have power to crucifie thee, and power to releaſe thee?* Proud worm! what an ignorant, and inſolent boaſt was this of his own power! and how doth Chriſt ſpoil and ſhame it in his anſwer? *John* 19. 10. *Thou couldeſt have no power at all againſt me, except it were given thee from above.*

Wicked men like wild horſes would run over and trample under foot all the people of God in the world, were it not that the brible of Divine Providence had a ſtrong curb to reſtrain them, *Ezek* 22. 6. *The Princes of* Iſrael *every one were in thee, to their power to ſhed blood.* And it was well for Gods *Iſrael* that their power was not as large as their wills were; this world is a raging and boiſterous Sea, which ſorely toſſes the paſſengers

sengers for heaven that sail upon it, but this is their comfort and security: *The Lord stilleth the noise of the sea, the noise of the waves, and the tumult of the people*, Psal. 65:7. Moral as well as natural waves, are checked and bounded by Divine power. *Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain*, Psal. 76:10: As a man turns so much water into the channel as will drive the mill, and turns away the rest in another sluce.

Yea, not only the power of man, but the power of Devils also is under the restraint and limitation of this power, Rev. 3:10: *Satan shall cast some of you into prison, and ye shall have tribulation ten days.* He would have cast them into their graves, yea, into hell if he could, but it must be only into a prison, he would have kept them in prison till they had dyed and rotted there, but it must be only for ten days. Oh glorious Sovereign power! which thus keeps the reins of Government in its own hand!

3: The power of God is an everlasting power; time doth not weaken or diminish it, as it doth all creature powers, *Isa.* 40.28. *The Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary, Isa.* 59. 1. *The Lords hand is not shortned*; (*i.e.*) He hath as much power now as ever he had, and can do for his people as much as ever he did; time will decay the power of the strongest creature, and make him faint and feeble; but the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not. *Thou*, saith the Psalmist, *abidest for ever, thy years flee not*, Psal. 102. 27. In Gods working

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ing there is no expence of his ſtrength, he is able to do as much as ever he did, to act over again all the glorious deliverances that ever he wrought for his people from the beginning of the World; to do as much for his Church now as he did at the Red Sea; and upon this ground the Church builds its Plea, *Iſa.* 51. 9, 10. *Awake, awake, put on ſtrength O arm of the Lord, awake as in the ancient days of the generations of old, art thou not it that haſt cut* Rahab, *and wounded the* Dragon? *q.d.* Lord why ſhould not thy people at this day expect as glorious productions of thy power as any of them found in former ages?

SECT II.

LET us view the power of God in the vaſt extent of its operation, and then you will find it working beyond the line.

1. Of Creature power.
2. Of Creature expectation.
3. Of Humane probability.

1. Beyond the line of all created power, even upon the hearts, thoughts, and minds of men, where no creature hath any juriſdiction. So *Gen.* 31. 29, God bound up the Spirit of *Laban*, and becalmed it towards *Jacob.* So *Pſal.* 106. 46. *He made them alſo to be pitied of all them that carried them captives*, Thus the Lord promiſed *Jeremy*, *Jer.* 15. 11. *I will cauſe the enemies to entreate thee well, in the time of evil.* This power of God ſoftens

ſoftens the hearts of the moſt fierce and cruell enemies, and ſweetens the ſpirits of the moſt bitter and enraged foes of his people.

2. Beyond the line of all Creature expectations, *Eph.* 3. 20. *God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think.* He doth ſo in *Spirituals*; as appears by thoſe two famous Parables, *Luk.* 15. 19, 22. *And am no more worthy to be called thy ſon; make me as one of thy hired ſervants.* But *the Father ſaid to his ſervants, bring forth the beſt robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and ſhoes on his feet.* The Prodigal deſired to be but as an hired ſervant, and lo, the fatted Calf is killed for him, and muſick to his meat, and the gold ring upon his finger. And in *Matth* 18. 26, 27. The Debitor did but deſire patience, and the Creditor forgave the Debt. O, thinks a poor humbled Sinner, if I might have but the leaſt glimpſe of hope, how ſweet would it be! but God brings him to more than he expects, even the clear ſhining of aſſurance. It is ſo in *Temporals*, the Church confeſſes the Lord *did things they looked not for*, *Iſa.* 64. 3. And in both Spirituals and Temporals this power moves in an higher Orb than our thoughts, *Iſa.* 55. 8, 9. *My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor my wayes your wayes; but as far as the Heavens are above the Earth, ſo are my thoughts above your thoughts;* The Earth is but a *punctum* to the Heavens; all its talleſt Cedars, Mountains, and Pyramids cannot reach it: He ſpeaks, as was ſaid before, of GODS pitying, pardoning, and merciful thoughts, and ſhews

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that no creature can think of GOD, as he doth of the creature under ſin, or under miſery. Our thoughts are not his; either Firſt, by way of *ſimple cogitation* we cannot think ſuch thoughts towards others in miſery, by way of pity; or under ſin againſt us by way of pardon, as GOD doth: Nor Secondly, are our thoughts as GODS in reſpect of *reflexive comprehenſion*; *i. e.* We cannot conceive or comprehend what thoſe thoughts of GOD towards us are, when we fall into ſin or miſery; juſt as he thinks them, they are altered, debaſed, and ſtraitned as ſoon as ever they come into our thoughts. See an excellent inſtance in *Gen.* 48. 11. *I had not thought to ſee thy Face, and lo GOD hath ſhewed me all thy ſeed.* A ſurprizing providence; and thus the Divine power works in a Sphere above all the thoughts, prayers and expectations of men.

3. It works beyond all probabilities, and rational conjectures of men; this Almighty power hath created deliverances for the people of GOD, when things have been brought to the loweſt ebb, and all the means of ſalvation have been hid from their eyes. We have diverſe famous inſtances of this in Scripture, wherein we may obſerve a remarkable *gradation* in the working of this Almighty power: It is ſaid in the 2 *Kin.* 14. 26, 27. *The Lord ſaw the affliction of* Iſrael, *that it was very bitter, for there was not any ſhut up, nor any left; nor any helper for Iſrael.* A deplorable ſtate; how inevitable was their ruine to the eye of ſenſe? Well might it be called

called a bitter affliction; Yet from this immediate power aroſe for them a ſweet and unexpected Salvation; and if we look into 2 *Cor.* 1. 9, 10. we ſhal find the Apoſtles and choiceſt Chriſtians of thoſe times, giving up themſelves as loſt men, all ways of eſcape being quite out of ſight; for ſo much thoſe words ſignifie, *We had the ſentence of death in our ſelves*; *i.e.* We yeelded our ſelves for dead men. But though they were ſentenced to death, yea, though they ſentenced themſelves this power which wrought above all their thoughts, and rational conjectures, reprieved them. And yet one ſtep farther in *Ezek.* 37. 4, 5, 6, 8. The people of God are there repreſented as actually dead, yea as in their graves, yea as rotted in their graves, and their very bones dry; like thoſe that are dead of old; ſo utterly improbable was their recovery; yet by the working of this Almighty power which ſubdueth all things to it ſelf, their graves in *Babylon* were opened, the breath of life came into them, bone came to bone, and there ſtood up a very great Army; it was the working of this power above the thoughts of mans heart, which gave the ground of that famous Proverb, *Gen.* 22. 14. *In the Mount of the Lord it ſhall be ſeen.* And the ground of that famous Promiſe, *Zech.* 14. 7, *At evening time it ſhal be light*; *i.e.* Light ſhall unexpectedly ſpring up, when all men according to the courſe and order of Nature, expect nothing but increaſing darkneſs. How extenſive is the power of God in its glorious operations!

SECT.

SECT. III.

LET us view the power of God in its relation to the promiſes, for ſo it becomes our Sanctuary in the day of trouble; if the *Power* of God be the *Chamber*, 'tis the *Promiſe* of God which is that Golden *Key* that opens it. And if we conſult the Scriptures in this matter, we ſhall find the almighty power of *God* made over to his people by promiſe, for many excellent ends and uſes in the day of their trouble. As,

1. To uphold and ſupport them, when their own ſtrength fails, *Iſa.* 41. 10. *Fear thou not, for I am with thee, be not diſmayed for I am thy God; I will ſtrengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſs.* And which of the Saints have not ſenſibly felt theſe everlaſting arms, underneath their ſpirits, when afflictions have preſſed them above their own ſtrength? So runs the promiſe to *Paul* in 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. *My grace is ſufficient for thee, for my ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs; i. e.* It is made known in thy weakneſs. Our weakneſs adds nothing to Gods power, it doth not make his power perfect, but it hath the better advantage of its diſcovery, and puts forth it ſelf more ſignally and conſpicuouſly in our weakneſs; as the ſtars which never ſhine ſo gloriouſly, as in the darkeſt night.

2. To preſerve them in all their dangers, to which they lie expoſed in Soul and Body. 1 *Peter* 1. 5. *You are kept* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *by the mighty*

mighty power of God. Kept as in a Garison; this is their arm every morning, as it is *Isa.* 33. 2. *O Lord be gracious unto us, we have waited for thee, be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in time of trouble.* The arm is that member which is fitted for the defence of the body, and for that end so placed by the God of Nature; that it may guard every part above and below it: but as good they were bound behind our backs, for any help they can give us in some cases: It is GODS Arm that defends us, and not our own. This invisible power of GOD makes the Saints the worlds wonder. *Psal.* 71. 7. *I am as a wonder to many, but thou art my strong refuge.* To see poor defenceless Creatures preserved, in the midst of furious enemies, that is just matter of wonder; but God being their invisible refuge, that solves the wonder; to this end the power of God is by promise engaged to his people, *Isa.* 27. 3. *I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.* And thus they subsist in the midst of dangers and troubles; as the burning Bush the Emblem of the Church) did amidst the devouring flames, *Exod.* 3. 3.

3. To deliver them out of their distresses, so runs the Promise, *Psalm* 91. 14, 15. Because, *he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him on high, because he hath known my name: he shall call upon me, and I will answer him, I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him, and honour him.* And *Jer.* 30. 7. *Alas,*

for that day is great, ſo that none is like it: It is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but ye ſhal be ſaved out of it. And ſurely there can be no diſtreſs ſo great no caſe of Believers ſo forlorn; but,

1. It's eaſie with God to ſave them out of it. Are they to the eye of Senſe loſt, as hopeleſs as men in the grave? Yet ſee *Ezek.* 37. 12. *O my people, I will open your graves, and cauſe you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Iſrael.* And he doth what ever he doth eaſily, with a word, *Pſal.* 44. 4. *Thou art my king, O God, command deliverance for Jacob.* And it requireth no more violent motion to do it, than he that ſwimeth in the water uſes, *Iſa.* 25. 11. A gentle eaſie motion of the hand doth it.

2. And as the power of God can deliver them eaſily, ſo ſpeedily. Their deliverance is often wrought by way of ſurprizal, *Iſa.* 17. 14. *Behold, at evening tide trouble; and in the morning he is not.* So the Church prays in *Pſal.* 126. 4 *turn again our captivity, as the ſtreams in the South* The Southern Countreys are dry, the ſtream there come not in a gentle and ſlow current, but being occaſioned by violent ſudden ſpouts of Rain, they preſently overflow the Countrey and as ſoon retire: So ſpeedily can the power of GOD free his people from their dangers and fears.

3. Yea, ſuch is the excellency of his delivering power, that he can ſave alone without any contribution of Creature aids. So *Iſa.* 56. 16 *He wondered that there was no interceſſour; therefore his hand brought ſalvation unto him, and his*

righteouſneſs ſuſtained him. We read indeed Jud. 5. 23. Of helping the Lord, but that is not to expreſs his *need*, but their *duty*; we have continual need of God, but he hath no need of us; he uſes inſtruments, but not out of neceſſity, his arm alone can ſave us, be the danger never ſo great, or the viſible means of deliverance never ſo remote.

4. Once more, let us view this Chamber of Divine power, as it is continually opened by the hand of providence, to receive and ſecure the people of GOD in all their dangers. 'Tis ſaid, 2 Chro. 16. 9. *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in behalf of them, whoſe heart is perfect towards him.* Where you have an excellent account of the immediacy, univerſality, and efficacy of Divine Providence, as it uſes and applies this Divine power for the guard and defence of that people, who are its charge; he doth not only ſet Angels to watch for them, but his own eyes keep *Sentinel*, even thoſe ſeven eyes of Providence mentioned *Zech.* 3. 9. which *never ſleep nor ſlumber*; for they are ſaid to run continually to and fro, and that not in this or that particular place only, for the ſervice of ſome more eminent and excellent perſons; but through the whole earth. 'Tis an encompaſſing and ſurrounding providence which hath its eye upon all, whoſe hearts are upright; all the Saints are within the line of its care and protection; the eye of providence diſcovereth all their dangers; and its arm defends them, for he ſhews himſelf ſtrong in their behalf.

The

The ſecret, but Almighty efficacy of Providence is alſo excellently deſcribed to us in *Ezek.* 1. 8. where the Angels are ſaid to have their hands under their wings, working ſecretly and undiſcernibly, but very effectually for the Saints committed to their charge. Like unto which is that in *Hab.* 3. 4. where it is ſaid of God, that *He had horns coming out of his hands, and there was the hiding of his power.* The hand is the inſtrument of action, denoting Gods active power, and the horns coming out of them, are the glorious raies, and beams of that power ſhining forth in the ſalvation of his people: O that we could ſun ourſelves in thoſe chearful and reviving beams of Divine power, by conſidering how gloriouſly they have broken forth, and ſhone out for the ſalvation of his people in all Ages. So it did for *Iſrael* at the Red Sea, *Exod.* 15. 6. So for *Jehoſhaphat* in that great ſtreight, 2 *Chron.* 20. 12, 15. And ſo in the time of *Hezekiah*, 2 *Kings* 19. 3. 7. Yea in all ages from the beginning of the World the Saints have been ſheltered under theſe wings of Divine Power, *Iſa.* 51. 9, 10. Thus providence hath hanged and adorned this Chamber of Divine power with the delightful Hiſtories of the Churches manifold preſervations by it.

SECT. IV.

HAving taken a ſhort view of this glorious Chamber of Gods power abſolutely in it ſelf

ſelf, and alſo in relation to his promiſes and providences, it remains now, that I preſs and perſwade all the people of God under their fears & dangers according to *Gods* gracious invitation to enter into it, ſhut their doors, and to behold with delight this glorious Attribute working for them in all their exigences and diſtreſſes.

1. Enter into this Chamber of Divine Power, all ye that fear the Lord, and hide your ſelves there in theſe dangerous and diſtreſsful days; let me ſay to you as the Prophet did to the poor diſtreſſed *Jews*, *Zech.* 9. 12. *Turn ye to your ſtrong hold, ye priſoners of hope*, Strong holds might they ſay, Why, where are they? The walls of *Jeruſalem* are in the duſt, the Temple burnt with fire, *Sion* an heap; what meaneſt thou then in telling us of our ſtrong holds? Why, admit all this, yet there is *Satis præſidii in uno Deo*, Refuge enough for you in GOD alone, as *Calvin* excellently notes upon that place. Chriſtian, art not thou able to fetch a good ſubſiſtence for thy Soul by Faith, out of the Almighty power of God? The renowned Saints of old did ſo. *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob* met with as many difficulties and plunges of trouble in their time, as ever you did, or ſhall meet with, yet by the exerciſe of their faith upon this Attribute, they lived comfortably: and why cannot you? *Exod.* 6. 3. I *appeared* (ſaith God) *unto* Abraham, Iſaac, *and* Jacob, *by the name of God Almighty*. They kept houſe and feaſted by Faith upon this name of mine, O

that

that we could do as *Abraham* did, *Rom.* 4. 21. We have the ſame Attribute, but alas, we have not ſuch a faith as his was to improve it. It is eaſie to believe the Almighty power of God in a calm, but not ſo eaſie to reſign our ſelves to it, and ſecurely reſt upon it, in a Storm of adverſity: But oh what peace and reſt would our Faith procure us by the free uſe and exerciſe of it this way, to aſſiſt your faith in this difficulty wherein we find the faith of a *Moſes* ſometimes ſtaggered. Let me briefly offer you theſe four following encouragements.

1. Conſider how your gracious God hath engaged this his Almighty power by Promiſe and Covenant for the ſecurity of his people, GOD pawned it as it were to *Abraham* in that famous promiſe, *Gen.* 17. 1. *I am the Almighty God, walk thou before me, and be perfect.* And *Gen.* 15. 1. *Fear not Abraham, I am thy ſhield.* Say not, this was *Abraham*'s peculiar priviledge, for if you conſult *Hoſ.* 12. 4. and *Heb.* 13. 5, 6. you will find that Believers in theſe days, have as good a title to the promiſes made in thoſe days, as thoſe worthies had to whom they were immediately made.

2. If you be Believers, your relation to God ſtrongly engageth his power for you, as well as his own promiſes, *Surely* (ſaith God) *they are my people, children that will not lie; ſo he became their Saviour*, *Iſa.* 63. 8. We ſay Relations have the leaſt of *Entitie*, but the greateſt of *Efficacie*; you find it ſo in your own experience, let a wife, child, or friend be in eminent danger, and it ſhall engage all the power you have to ſuccor and deliver them.

3. This

3. This glorious power of God is engaged for you by the very malice and wickedneſs of your enemies, who will be apt to impute the ruine of the Saints to the defects of power in their God; from whence thoſe excellent arguments are drawn, *Numb.* 14. 15, 16. *Now if thou ſhalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee, will ſpeak, ſaying, becauſe the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land, which he ſware unto them, therefore he hath ſlain them in the wilderneſs.* And again, *Deut.* 32. 26, 27. you ſhall find the Lord improving this argument for them himſelf; if they do not plead it for themſelves, he will. *I would ſcatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to ceaſe from among men, were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, leſt their adverſaries ſhould behave themſelves ſtrangely and leſt they ſhould ſay, our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this.* O ſee how much you are beholding to the very rage of your enemies for your deliverances from them!

4. To conclude, the very reliance of your Souls by faith upon the power of God, your very leaning upon his arm engages it for your protection, *Iſa.* 26. 3. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee, becauſe he truſteth in thee.* Puzle not your ſelves therefore any longer about qualifications, but know that the very acting of your faith on God, the recumbency of your Souls upon him, it is that which will engage him for your defence, how weak and defective ſoever thou art in other reſpects.

2. Having thus entered by Faith into this Chamber of Divine power, the next counsel the Text gives you is, to shut the door behind you, *i. e.* after the acting of your faith, and the quiet repose of your Souls upon Gods Almighty power, then take heed lest unbelieving fears and jealousies creep in again and disturb the rest of your Souls in God, you find a sad instance of this in *Moses*, *Numb.* 11. 21, 23. After so many glorious acts and triumphs of his Faith, how were his heels tripped up by diffidence which crept in afterwards; good men may be posed with difficult providences and made to stagger. The *Israelites* had lived upon miracles many years; yet *Psalm* 78. 20. *Can he give bread also?* Good *Martha* objects difficulty to Christ, *John* 11. 39. *By this time he stinketh.* O 'tis a glorious thing to give God the glory of his Almighty power, in difficult cases that we cannot comprehend. See *Zech.* 8. 6. *If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these dayes, should it be also marvellous in mine eyes? saith the Lord of Hosts.* Difficulties are for men, but not for God; because it is marvellous in your eyes, must it be so in Gods: Various objections will be apt to arise in your hearts to drive you out of this your refuge. As,

1. *Objection.* O but the long continuance of our troubles and distresses will sink our very hearts, *Isa.* 40. 27. *Why sayest thou, O* Jacob, *and speakest, O* Israel, *my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?*

Sol. But, O wait upon God without fainting, *Heb.*

Heb. 2. 3. *The viſion is yet for an appointed time, but at the end of it ſhall ſpeak and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, becauſe it will ſurely come, it will not tarry.*

2. *Objection.* O but our former hopes, and expectations of deliverance are fruſtrated, *Jer.* 8. 15. *We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble.*

Sol. O but yet be not diſcouraged, ſee how the *Pſalmiſt* begins the 69 *Pſal.* with *trembling*, and ends it with *triumph*; the husbandman waiteth, and ſo muſt you.

3. *Objection.* But there is no ſign or appearance of our deliverance.

Sol. What then this is no new thing, *Pſal.* 74. 9. *We ſee not our ſigns, there is no more any Prophet, neither is there any among us that knoweth how long.*

4. *Objection.* But all things work contrary to our hope.

Sol. Why, ſo did things with *Abraham*, yet ſee, *Romans* 4. 18. *againſt hope, he believed in hope.*

3. Obſerve further with delight the out goings and glorious workings of Divine power for you, and for the Church in times of trouble; this is ſweet entertainment for your Souls, 'tis food for Faith, *Pſal.* 74. 14. *Thou breakeſt the heads of the* Leviathan *in peeces, and gaveſt him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderneſs*; and here I beſeech you behold and admire,

1. It's myſterious and admirable protection of the Saints in all their dangers. They feed as

Sheep in the midst of Wolves, *Luke* 10. 3. they lie among them that are set on fire. *Psal.* 57. 4. *Their habitation is in the midst of deceit*, Jer. 9. 6. Yet they are kept in safety by the mighty power of God.

2. Behold and admire it in casting the bonds of restraint upon your enemies, that though they would, yet they cannot hurt you; our dangers are visible, and our fears great, but our security and safety admirable, *Isa.* 51. 13. *Thou hast feared continually every day, because of the fury of the oppressour, as if he were ready to destroy; and where is the fury of the oppressour.*

3. Behold its opening unexpected, and unlikely refuges and securities for the Saints in their distresses, *Isa.* 16. 4. *Let mine out-casts dwell with thee* Moab, *be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler, for the extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, the oppressours are consumed out of the land.* Rev. 12. 16. *the earth helped the Woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the Dragon cast out of his mouth.*

4. Behold it frustrating all the designs of our enemies against us, *Isa.* 54. 17. *No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. Behold, I have created the Smith*, Isa. 54. 16. *q. d.* He that created the Smith, can order as he pleaseth the weapon made by him; hence our enemies are not masters of their own designs.

O then depend upon this power of God, for it

is your security; there is a twofold dependence, the one Natural and necessary, the other Elective.

1. Natural dependance, so all do and must depend upon him.

2. Elective and voluntary, and so we all ought to depend upon him; and for your encouragement take this Scripture, *Psal.* 9.9, 10. *The Lord also will be a Refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble, and they that know thy name will put their trust in thee; for thou Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.* And thus of the first Attribute of God, prepared for the safety of his people in times of trouble.

CHAP. VII.

Opening that glorious Attribute of Divine Wisdom as a second Chamber of security to the Saints in difficult times.

SECT. I.

THE next Chamber of Divine Protection into which I shall lead you, is the *Infinite Wisdom of God*; I call it the next, because I so find it placed in Scripture, *Job* 36.5. *He is mighty in power and wisdom,* Dan. 2.20. *Wisdom and might are his.*

This Attribute may be fitly called the *Council Chamber of Heaven;* where all things are con-

rived in deepeſt wiſdom, which are afterwards wrought in the world by power, *Eph.* 1. 11. *He worketh all things after the Counſel of his own will.* Counſel in the Creature implies weakneſs and defect; we are not able at one thought to fathom the depth of a buſineſs, & therefore muſt deliberate and ſpend many thoughts about it, and when we have ſpent all our own thoughts we are oft times at a loſs, and muſt borrow help, and ask counſel of others; but in God it notes the perfection of his underſtanding, for as thoſe acts of the creature which are the reſults of deliberation and counſel, are the height and top of all rational contrivement; ſo in its accommodation to God, in notes the excellent reſults of his infinite and moſt perfect underſtanding.

Now this wiſdom of God is to be conſidered either,

Abſolutely,
or,
Relatively.

1. Abſolutely in it ſelf, and ſo it is, *That whereby he moſt perfectly and exactly knows himſelf, and all things without himſelf, ordering and diſpoſing them in the moſt convenient manner to the glory of his own name.*

Wiſdom comprehends two things, 1. Knowledge of the natures of things, which in the creature, is called *Science.* 2. Knowledge how to govern, order and diſpoſe them, which in the Creature is called *Prudence*; theſe things in man are but faint ſhadows of that which is in God in the moſt abſolute perfection; he fully knows himſelf,

himself, for his understanding is infinite, *Psal.* 147. 5. And the thoughts he thinks towards us, *Jer.* 29. 11. and as he perfectly understands himself, so likewise all things that are without himself, *Act.* 15. 18. *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.* Together with all the secret designs, thoughts, and purposes which lie hid from all others in the inmost recesses of mens hearts, *Psal.* 139. 2.

And as he perfectly knows all things, so he fully understands how to govern and direct them to the best end, even the exalting of his own praise, *Psal.* 104. 24. *Rom.* 11. 36. *for of him, and through him, and to him are all things.* Of him, as the *efficient cause*; through him, as the *conserving cause*; and to him as the *final cause*. And in this wise disposition of all things, he hath a gracious respect to the good of his chosen, *Rom.* 8. 28. *All things shall work together for good to them that love God.* More particularly, the wisdom of God is to be considered by us in its excellent properties, amongst which these four following are eminently conspicuous, as it is the,

1. Original.
2. Essential.
3. Perfect, and
4. Only wisdom.

1. The wisdom of God is the Original wisdom, from which all the wisdom found in Angels or men is derived, and unto that fountain we are directed to go, for supplies of wisdom, *Jam.* 1. 5.

If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God. There is indeed a spirit in man, but it is the inspiration of the Almighty that giveth understanding, Job 32. 8. The natural faculty is ours, but the illumination thereof is Gods; the understanding of the Creature is as the *Diel* which signifies nothing, till the *Sun* shine upon it.

2. Gods Wisdom is Essential Wisdom, Wisdom in the Creature is but a quality separable from the subject; but in God it is his Nature, his very Essence, he can as soon cease to be God, as to be most wise.

3. The Wisdom of God is perfect wisdom, full of it self, and exclusive of its contrary; the wisest of men are not wise at all times, the greatest wits are not without some mixture of madness; it is an high attainment in humane wisdom to understand our own weakness and folly; the deepest heads are but shallow, but the wisdom of God is an unsearchable depth, Rom. 11. 33 *O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out?*

4. To conclude, the wisdom of God is the only wisdom; there is no wisdom without him, none against him, he is the only wise God, Jud. 25.

2. The wisdom of God must be considered *Relatively*, and that in a double respect:

1. To his Promises.
2. To his Providences.

SECT

SECT. II.

LET us view it in its relation to the Promiſes, where you ſhall find it made over by God to his people for diverſe excellent uſes, and purpoſes in times of diſtreſs and danger. As,

1. It is made over to them in Promiſes for their direction and guidance when they know not what to do, or which way to take: So *Pſal.* 25. 9. *The meek will he guid in judgement, and the meek will he teach his way, And Iſa.* 58, 11. *The Lord ſhall guide thee continually.* And. *Pſal.* 32. 8. *I will guide thee with mine eye.* And with this the *Pſalmiſt* encourages himſelf, *Pſal.* 73. 24. *Thou ſhalt guide me with thy counſel, and afterwards receive me to glory.* O what an invaluable mercy is this! we ſhould make Shipwrack both of our Temporal and Eternal mercies quickly, were it not for guidance of Divine Wiſdom.

2. To Extricate them when involved in difficulties: So 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation.* They know not how, but their God doth; they are often at a loſs, but he is never: So 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *There hath no temptation taken you, but ſuch as is common to man, but God is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape that ye may be able to bear it.*

3. To over-rule and order all their troubles to their good, and real advantage: So runs that moſt comprehenſive promiſe, *Rom.* 8. 28. *All things ſhal work together for good to them that*

love God. In the faith whereof *Paul* concludes, *Phil.* 1. 19. Even this ſhall work for his Salvation. Thus the people of God were ſent into captivity for their good, *Jer.* 24 8. and *Joſeph* into *Egypt*, *Gen.* 50. 20. *Ye thought evil againſt me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to paſs as it is this day, to ſave much people alive.*

2. Let us view the Wiſdom of God in its Relation to his Providences, for there it ſhines forth eminently, *Ezek.* 1. 18. The wheels were full of eyes, *i.e.* the motions and Providential revolutions in this lower world, as very Judicious and adviſed motions, *Non cæco impetu voluntur rotæ*, It hath a fetch and deſign which no man underſtands till it open it ſelf in the event.

The enemies of the Church are oft times men of the fineſt brains, and deepeſt policies: *Herod* a Fox for ſubtilty, *Luke* 13. 32. *Julian* and *Ahitophel*, with many others, who have digged as deep as Hell in their counſels, and laid their deſigns ſo ſure, that they doubted not but to be maſters of it, yet their hands could not perform their enterprize.

The wiſdom of Providence hath ſtill befooled them, and baffled the cunningeſt head-peece that ever undertook any deſign againſt the Church, as faſt as ever they aroſe; and herein the Wiſdom of Providence is remarkable in three things eſpecially.

1. In revealing and diſcovering the ſecret conſpiracies and counſels of the Churches enemies, and thereby fruſtrating their deſigns, *Gen.* 27, 41, 42. *Providence* (as one calls it) is the

Bird of the air that carries tidings, and whiſtles deeds of darkneſs, *Job* 12. 22. *He diſcovereth deep things out of darkneſs, and bringeth out to light the ſhadow of death* And this God hath done both *immediately and mediately.* 1. Immediately, 2 *Kings* 6. 11. What counſel ſoever the King of *Syria* took in his bed-chamber was ſtill diſcovered by the LORD to the Prophet. So true is that, *Job* 34. 22. *There is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves.* Thus the deſign of *Herod* is revealed to *Joſeph* in a dream.

But commonly he doth it by means; as

1. By giving knowledge of it to ſome that are under obligations of duty, or affection to reveal it to theſe that are concerned in the danger. So *Paul's* Siſters Son, *Acts* 23. 16. revealed the conſpiracy againſt his life, and ſo the Plot miſcarried by revealing it before it was ripe for execution.

2. By the failure of ſome circumſtance, the whole is brought to light; there be many fine threeds upon which the deſigns of Politicians hang, if one break the whole deſign is unravelled. Thus the Wiſdom of God ſometimes prevents his peoples ruine, by taking away the ſpeech of the truſty from him, and making their own tongues to fall upon themſelves.

3. By their own confeſſion; So *Pſalm* 64. 5, 6, 7, 8. where you have the Plot laid, *ver.* 5. *They encourage themſelves in an evil matter, they comune of laying ſnars privily, they ſay, who ſhal ſee them?*

them? *The deep contrivance of it, ver.* 6. *They ſearch out iniquity, they accompliſh a diligent ſearch; both the inward thoughts of every one of them, and the heart is deep.* Their Plot *deſtroyed, ver.*7. *But God ſhal ſhoot at them with an arrow, ſuddenly ſhal they be wounded.* The *method* or way of Providence in deſtroying it, *ver.* 8. *So they ſhal make their own tongue to fall upon themſelves, all that ſee them, ſhall flee away.* Thus hath the Wiſdom of our God wrought for us this day beyond all the thoughts of our hearts; and oh that it might make ſuch impreſſions upon all our hearts, as follow in the 9. and 10. *verſes, All men ſhall fear, and ſhall declare the work of God, for they ſhall wiſely conſider his doing. The righteous ſhall be glade in the* Lord, *and ſhall truſt in him, and all the upright in heart ſhall glory.*

2. The Wiſom of God diſcovers it ſelf in behalf of that people who are his own, in diverting the danger from them; & putting by the deadly thruſts their enemies make at them; thus it ſpoils their game by an unforeſeen rub in the green; and that eſpecially three ways,

1. By making their counſels to jar among themſelves, in which jars is the ſweeteſt harmony of providence; thus the counſel of *Ahithophel* jars with the counſel of *Huſhai*, 2 *Sam.* 17. 5, 7. by which means *David* eſcaped: the *Phariſees* claſhed with the *Sadducees*, *Acts* 23. 7. and by that means *Paul* eſcaped.

2. By cutting out other work, and ſtarting ſome new deſign which like a freſh ſcent puts the dogs to a loſs. Thus the people of God in

Jeru-

Jerusalem were delivered by a diversion, 2 *Kin.* 19. 7. *Behold I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour and shall return to his own land, and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land,* so Rabshakeh *returned.* By this means also was *David* delivered from the hand of *Saul,* 1 *Sam.* 23. 27. And in this method of providence, that Scripture is often fulfilled, *Prov.* 21, 18. *The wicked shal be a ransom for the Righteous, and the transgressour for the upright.*

3. By cutting off the capital enemies of his Church, by whose seasonable destruction they are delivered. Thus fell *Julian,* that bitter enemy of the Christians, when he was preparing to put his last and most bloudy design against them in execution. And thus fell *Haman, Nero,* and many more in the very height and heat of their designs against the Church.

4. The Wisdom of God gloriously displays it self in causing the designs of the wicked, like a surcharged gun to recoil upon and destroy themselves: It often falls out with the undermining enemies of the Church, as it sometimes doth with them that dig deep mynes in the earth, who are destroyed and buried in their own work; *Psal.* 9. 15, 16. *The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made, in the net which they hid is their own foot taken. The Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth, the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgajon, Selah.* There is a double mercy in this providence, one in the delivering the Saints from the danger, the other in causing it to fall upon the contrivers, and is there-

therefore celebrated with a double note of attention; in these observable strokes, the righteousness of God shines forth, in repaying his peoples enemies in their own coin.

——nec lex est justior ulla,
quam necis Artifices arte perire sua.

Thus *Haman* did eat the first fruits of that tree which his own hands planted, and thus *Jerusalem* becomes a burthensome stone to all that burthen themselves with it, *Zech.* 12. 3.

4. Admire and adore the wisdom of your GOD, in those great and unexpected advantages, which arise to you out of those very dangers and designs of your enemies that threatned your ruine; the very hands of your very enemies are sometimes made the instruments of your advancement and enlargement; your persecutions become your priviledges, the Motto of the *Palm* tree fitly becomes yours, *Suppressa Resurgo.*

In three things the wisdom of God makes advantage out of your troubles.

1. In fortifying your Souls and Bodies with suitable strength, when any eminent trials intended for you: So it was with the Apostles, *2 Cor.* 1. 5. *As the sufferings of Christ abound in us so our consolation by Christ* God lays in suitably to what men lay on mercilesly: Christ would not draw the poor timorous disciples out of *Jerusalem* unto hard encounters, until first he had endued them with power from on high, *Luk* 24. 49

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2. The wisdom of your God can, and often doth, make your very troubles and sufferings instead of so many ordinances to strengthen your Faith, and fortify your Patience. So the heads of *Leviathan* became meat to his people inhabiting the wilderness, *Psal.* 74. 14. And so the Plots of *Balak* & *Balaam*, were designed by God, to be as a standing instructing ordinance for the encouragment of his peoples faith in future difficulties *Micah* 6. 5. *O my people remember now what* Balak *King of* Moab *consulted, and what* Balaam *the son of* Beor *answered him from* Shittim *unto* Gilgal *that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord. q. d.* You cannot but remember how those your enemies courted me with multitudes of Offerings to deliver you up into their hands, and how faithfully I stood by you in all those dangers; that Plot discovered at once the policy of your enemies, and the righteousness of your God.

3. His wisdom is discovered to your advantage in permitting your dangers to grow to an extremity, on purpose to magnifie his goodness, and increase your comfort in your deliverance from it. *Psal.* 126. 1 *When the* Lord *turned our captivity we were as them that dreamed.* Proportionable to the greatness of your dangers will your joyes be.

SECT. III.

WEll then, if the wisdom of God shines forth so gloriously in the times of his peoples trouble; be perswaded by Faith to enter into this Chamber also; it is a Chamber where

a believing Soul may enjoy the sweetest rest; and quietness in the most hurring and distracting times; shut the door behind you, and improve this Attribute to your best advantage.

1. Enter into this Chamber by Faith, believe firmly that the management of all the affairs of this world, whether publick or personal, is in the hands of your All-wise God; more particularly, exercise your faith about the Wisdom of God in these things.

1. Believe that the Wisdom of God can contrive and order the way of your escape and deliverance, when all doors of hope are shut up to sense and reason; we know not what to do, said good *Jehoshaphat*, but our eyes are unto thee *q. d.* Lord though I am at a loss and see no way of escape, thou art never at a loss. The *Lord* (saith *Peter*) knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of temptation: Divine wisdom hath infinite methods and wayes of deliverance unknown to man, till they are opened in the event.

2. Believe that the Wisdom of God can turn your greatest troubles & fears into the choicest blessings and mercies to you: I know (saith *Paul*) that this shall turn to my Salvation, *Phil.* 1. 19. meaning his bonds and sufferings for Christ. Divine wisdom can give you honey out of the carcase of the Lyon, cause you to part with those afflictions, admiring and blessing God for them which you met with fear and trembling, and suspecting your destruction was imported in them.

3. In consideration of both these, resign

you

your ſelves to the wiſdom of God, and lean not to your own underſtandings; *commit thy way unto the Lord, and thy thoughts ſhall be eſtabliſhed*, *Prov.* 16. 3. When *Melancton* was oppreſſed with cares and doubts about the diſtracting affairs of the Church in his time; *Luther* thus chides him out of his deſpondency, *Deſinet Philippus eſſe rector mundi*, do not thou preſume to be the Governour of the world; but leave the reins of Government in his hand that made it, and beſt knows how to rule it; let God alone to chuſe thy lot and portion, to order thy condition, and manage all thy affairs, and let thy Soul take its reſt in this quiet Chamber of Divine Wiſdom. But then,

2. Be ſure to ſhut thy door behind thee, and beware leſt unbelief, anxieties, fears and doubts creep in after thee to diſturb thy reſt, and ſhake thy faith in this point; we are apt in two caſes to be ſtumbled in this matter.

1. When ſubtle and cunning enemies are engaged againſt us; this was *Davids* caſe, 2 *Sam.* 15. 31. *One told David, ſaying, Ahitophel is among the conſpirators with Abſolom; and David ſaid, O Lord, I pray thee turn the counſel of Ahitophel into fooliſhneſs.* When he heard that *Achitophel* was with the Conſpirators, it greatly puzled him. Though a whole Conclave of *Politicians* be againſt us, yet if God be with us let us not fear.

2. When our own reaſon intrudes too far, and offers its dictates too boldly in the caſe, we are apt to ſay in the arrogancy of our own reaſon,

we

we cannot be delivered; but O that we would learn to resign it up to the VViſdom of GOD. The Lord knows how to deliver the godly. VVhen the queſtion was asked the Prophet, Ez. 37. 3. Can theſe dry bones live? He anſwers, Lord thou knoweſt. That's excellent counſel, *prov.* 3. 5. *Truſt in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own underſtanding.*

3. Improve the VViſdom of God for your ſelves in all difficult and diſtreſsful caſes.

1. Beg of God to exerciſe his wiſdom for you when enemies conſpire againſt you. So did *David*, 2 *Sam.* 15. 31. *Lord turn the counſel of* Ahithophel *into fooliſhneſs*! O 'tis the noblest and ſureſt way to vanquiſh an enemy; it will but asked and done.

2. Comfort your ſelves with this whenever you are at a loſs in your own thoughts, and know not what to do, then commit all to Divine conduct; let GOD ſteer for you in a ſtorm he loves to be truſted, *Pſal.* 37. 5. *Commit thy way unto the Lord, truſt alſo in him, and he ſhall bring it to paſs.*

3. Encourage your ſelves from this when the Church is in the greateſt danger, and moſt ſorely ſhaken; O that is a bleſſed promiſe, *Zech.* 3. 9. *Upon one ſtone ſhall be ſeven eyes.* Meaning Chriſt, and the Church built on him as the chief corner ſtone; the ſeven eyes are the ſeven eyes of Providence which are never all aſleep.

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CHAP. VIII.

Opening that glorious Attribute of Divine Faithfulneſs as a third Chamber of Security to the people of God in times of diſtreſs and danger.

SECT. I.

HAving viewed the Saints Refuge in the power and Wiſdom of God, we next proceed to a third Chamber of Safety for the Saints refuge. *viz.* The *Faithfulneſs* of God.

In this Attribute is our Safety and Reſt amidſt the confuſions of the world and dayly diſappointments we are vexed withal through the vanity and falſeneſs of the Creature: As to Creatures, the very beſt of them they are but vanity, yea, vanity of vanity the vaneſt vanity, *Eccleſ.* 1. 2. *Every man in his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity*, *pſal.* 39. 5. Yea, thoſe that we expect moſt from, give us moſt of trouble, *Mic.* 7. 5. Neareſt Relations bring up the rear of ſorrows, *Job* 6 15. *My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook.* Eſpecially their deceit appears moſt when we have moſt need of their help, *pſal.* 142. 4. How great a mercy is it then to have a refuge in the Faithfulneſs of God, as *David* had,

had, *I looked on my right hand, and beheld, b*
there was no man that would know me, refuge faile
me, no man cared for my soul. And likewiſe th
Church, *Micah* 7.7. *I will look unto the Lord,*
will wait for the God of my ſalvation, my God wi
hear me. A time may come when you ſhall n
know where to truſt in all this world: Let m
therefore open to you this Chamber of reſt in t
Faithfulneſs of God, againſt ſuch a day, a
this I ſhall do in a two fold conſideration of
viz.

1. Abſolutely in its own Nature.
2. Relatively in the Promiſes and Providen
of God.

1. Abſolutely, and ſo the Faithfulneſ
God is his ſincerity, firmneſs, and conſtanc
performing his word to his people in all ti
and caſes. So *Moſes* deſcribes him to *Iſrael, D*
7.9. *Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is*
the faithful God. And *Ioſhua* appeals to their ex
rience for the vindication of it, *Ioſh* 23.14. *Yeh*
in all your hearts, and all your ſouls, that not one t
hath failed of all the good things which the Lord
God ſpake concerning you; all are come to paſs;
not one thing hath failed thereof. And it is alſo
aſſerted, *Jer.* 31. 36, 37. And greatly
mired even in the darkeſt day, *Lam.* 3.
Great is thy faithfulneſs. And it is well fo
that his faithfullneſs is gr at, for great is
weight that leans upon it even all our hope
both worlds, for this world and for that to co

Tit. 1. 2. *In hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began.*

It was a very dishonourable character that *Suidas* gave of *Tiberius*, *Eorum quæ appetebat ne quicquam præ se ferebat, & eorum quæ dicebat, ne quicquam facere volebat.* *i.e.* He never made shew of having what he desired to have, nor ever minded to do what he promised to do: But God is faithful, and that will appear by these following Evidences of it.

1. *Evidence.*

By his exact fulfilling of his Promises of the longest date. So *Acts* 7. 6. Four hundred and thirty years were run out before the Promise of *Israel's* deliverance out of *Egypt* was accomplished; yet *Acts* 7. 17. when the time of the promise was come, God was punctual to a day: Seventy years in *Babylon*, and at the expiration of that time they returned. 2 *Chron.* 36. 21. Men may forget, but God cannot, *Isa.* 49. 15. 16.

2. *Evidence.*

By making way for his Promise through the greatest difficulties, and seeming impossibilities. So to *Abraham* when old, *Gen.* 18. 13, 14. *Is there any thing too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time will I return unto thee, according to the time of life; and* Sarah *shall have a son.* And likewise to the *Israelites*, Can these dry bons live? *Ezeck.* 37. 3. Difficulties are for men, not God, *Gen.* 18. 14. What art thou, O great Mountain, *Zech.* 8. 6. *If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the Lord of hosts.*

3. *Evi-*

3. *Evidence.*

By fulfilling promises to his people, when t
hopes and expectations have been given up.
Ezek. 37. 11 Our bones are dry, our hopes l
we are cut off for our part. And *Isa.* 49.
Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and
Lord hath forgotten me. There may be much
belief in good men, their faith may be for
staggered, yet God is faithful, men may que
on his promises, yet God cannot deny himse
2 *Tim.* 2. 13.

4. *Evidence.*

By Gods appealing to his people and refer
the matter to their own judgments, *Mich*
3, 4, 5. *O my people, what have* I *done unto t*
and wherein have I *wearied thee*? *Testifie ag*
me, for I *brought thee up out of the land of* Eg
and redeemed thee out of the house of servants,
I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, *and* Mir
O my people, remember now what Balak Ki
Moab *consulted, and what* Balaam *the so*
Beor *answered him from* Shittim *unto* Gilgal,
ye may know the righteousness of the Lord. q. d.
have failed in a *punctilio* of my promise, shew
did not *Balak* and *Balaam* court me, and try
wayes to win Me over to them by multitud
of Sacrifices, yet I did not desert you. So
2. 31. *O generation, see ye the word of the L*
have I been a wilderness unto Israel, *a land of d*
ness? *wherefore say my people, we are lords,*
will come no more unto thee? *Isa.* 44. 8.

5.

5. *Evidence.*

The Faithfulneſs of GOD is abundantly cleared by the conſtant teſtimonies given unto it in all Ages by them that have tryed it, they have all witneſſed for GOD, and atteſted his unſpotted faithfulneſs to the generations that were to come. So did *Joſhua* 23. 14. *All is come to paſs*; and ſo did *Daniel*, *chap.* 9. 4. *O Lord, the great and dreadful GOD, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him*: With which *David's* teſtimony concurs, *Pſal.* 146. 6. *Happy is he that hath the God of* Jacob *for his help, whoſe hope is in the* Lord *his* God, *which made the heaven and the earth, the ſea, and all that therein is, which keepeth truth for ever.* Thus his people have been witneſſes in all generations, unto the faithfulneſs of God in his promiſes; the conſideration whereof leaves no doubt or objection behind it.

SECT. II.

AND if we enquire into the grounds and reaſons why *God* is, and ever muſt be moſt Faithful in performing his promiſes, we ſhall find it is built upon ſtable and unſhaken pillars; *viz.*

1. The Holineſs of his Nature.
2. The All-ſufficiency of his Power.
3. The Honour of his Name.
4. The Unchangeableneſs of his Nature.

1. The Faithfulneſs of God is built upon the perfect Holineſs of his Nature, by reaſon whereof it is impoſſible for God to lie, *Tit.* 1. 2. *Heb.* 6. 18. The deceitfulneſs of men flows from the corruption

corruption of the Humane Nature, but G
not as man that he should lye, neither as the s
man that he should repent; hath he said, and s
he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he
make it good? *Numb.* 23. 19. If there be no
fect in his Beeing, there can be none in his wo
ipg; if his Nature be pure Holiness, all his w
must be perfect Faithfulness.

2. It is built upon the All-sufficiency of
Powers, whatsoever he hath promised to his p
ple, he is able to perform it; men sometim
falsifie their promises through the defects o
bility to perform them; but God never out-p
mised himself; if he will work none will l
Isa. 43. 13. He can do whatsoever he plea
to do, *Psal.* 135. 6. The Holiness of his Nat
engageth, and the Almightiness of his Po
enables him to be Faithful.

3. The Glory and Honour of his Name
assure us of his Faithfulness in making good
promises, and all that good which is in the
mises to a title; for wherever you find a
mise of GOD, you also find the Name and
nour of God given as security for the per
mance of it; and so his name hath ever b
pleaded with him by his people, as a mighty
gument to work for them, *Joshuah* 7. 9. *
wilt thou do to thy great name? *q. d.* Lord th
Honour is a thousand times more than our li
it is no such great matter what becomes of
but ah! Lord it is of infinite concernment that
glory of thy Name be secured; and thy faith
ness kept pure and unspotted in the world.

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again, Exod. 32. 11, 22. *And* Moses *besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought out of the land of* Egypt, *with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the* Egyptians *speak and say, for mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains; & to consume them from the face of the earth? turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people, q.d.* It will be sad enough for the hands of the *Egyptians* to fall upon thy people, but infinitely worse for the tongues of the *Egyptians* to fall upon thy Name.

4. The unchangeableness of his Nature gives us the fullest assurance of his Faithfulness in the Promises, *Mal.* 3. 6. *I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of* Jacob *are not consumed*. Gods unchangeableness is his peoples Indemnity, and best security in the midst of dangers; whilst there is not yea and nay with God, there should be no ups and downs, offs and ons in our faith; that which gives steadiness to the Promises, should give steadiness also to our expectations for the performance of them; and so much briefly of the faithfulness of God absolutely considered in the Nature and grounds of it.

2. Next let us view the Faithfulness of God, as it relates to the many great and precious Promises made unto his people for their security both in their,

1. Temporal, Concernments.
2. Spiritual,

1. We find the Faithfulness of GOD pawned and pledged for the security of his people in their Spiritual and Eternal concernments, against their dangers and fears, threatning them on that account, and that more especially in three respects.

1. It is given them as their great and best security for the pardon of their sins, 1 John. 1. 9. *If we confess our sins he is faithful, and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Our greatest danger comes from sin, guilt is the fountain of Fears, a pardoned Soul only can look other troubles in the face boldly. As Guilt breeds Fear, so Pardon breeds Courage, and GODS faithfulness in the Covenant is as it were that Pardon-Office from whence we fetch our discharges and acquittances, Isa. 43. 25. *I, even I am he, that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake.* The promises of remission are made for Christs sake, and when made they must be fulfilled for his own, that is his Faithfulness sake.

2. It is engaged for the perseverance of the Saints, and their continuance in the ways of God in the most hazardous and difficult times; which was the encouragement given them, 1 Cor. 1. 8. *Who shal also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ; God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.* Ah Lord! may those Corinthians say, the powers of the World are against us, Suffering and Death before us, Treacherous and fearful heart within us.

but yet fear not, Christ shall confirm you, whosoever opposes you; though the world and your own hearts be deceitful, yet comfort your selves with this, your God is faithful.

3. The Faithfulness of GOD is given by promise for his peoples security in, and encouragement against all their sufferings and afflictions in this World, 2 *Thes.* 3. 2, 3. *That we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men, for all men have not faith; but the Lord is faithful, who shal stablish you, and keep you from evil.* He prays they may be delivered from absurd, treacherous and unfaithful men who would trapan and betray them to ruine; but this is propounded as their relief, that when the treachery of men shal bring them into trouble, the faithfulness of God shall support them under, and deliver them out of those troubles; they shall have Spiritual supports from God, under their deepest sufferings from men, 1 *Pet.* 4. 19.

2. Gods Faithfulness is engaged for his peoples indemnity and security amidst the Temporal and outward evils whereunto they are liable in this world; and that either to preserve them from troubles; *psal.* 91. 1, 2, 3, 4. or to open a seasonable door of deliverance out of trouble, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. In both or either of which the hearts of Christians may be at rest in this troublesome world; for what need those troubles fright us, which either shal never touch us, or if they do, shall never hurt, much less ruine us.

SECT. III.

HAving taken a ſhort view of Gods Faithfulneſs in the Promiſes, it will be a lovely ſight to take one view of it more as it is actuated, and exerted in his Providences over his people; believe it Chriſtians, the Faithfulneſs of God through all his works of providence, whenſoever he goes forth to work in the world, *Faithfulneſs is the girdle of his loins, Iſa.* 11. 5. It is an allusion to workmen who going forth in the morning to their labour, gird their loins or reins with a girdle, now there is no work wrought by God in this world, but his faithfulneſs is as the Girdle of his Loins. The conſideration whereof ſhould make the moſt deſpondent believer, *gird up the Loins of his mind*, that is, encourage and ſtrengthen his drooping and diſcouraged heart. The works of God which are wrought in Faithfulneſs and in purſuit of his eternal purpoſes and gracious promiſes, ſhould rather delight, than affright us, in beholding of them. It pluckt out the Sting of *Davids* affliction when he conſidered it was in very faithfulneſs, that God had afflicted him, *Pſ.* 119. 89, 90. But more particularly let us behold with delight the faithfulneſs of God in making good ſix ſorts of Promiſes to his People in the days of their affliction and trouble, *viz.*

1. The Promiſes of Preſervation,
2. The Promiſes of Support.
3. The Promiſes of Direction.

4.

4. The Promises of Provision.
5. The Promises of Deliverance.
6. The Promises of Ordering and Directing the Event to their Advantage.

1. These are promises in the word for your preservation from ruine, and what you read in those promises you dayly see the same fulfilled in your own experiences. You have a promise in *Psa.* 57. 3. *He shall send from Heaven, and save me: from the reproach of him that would swallow me up.* Selah. *God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.* Say now, have you not found it so, when Hell hath sent forth its Temptations to defile you? The World its persecutions to destroy your own heart, its unbelieving fears to distract and sink you, hath not your God sent forth also his mercy and truth to save you; Hath not his truth been your shield and buckler? *Psal.* 92. 4. May you not say with the Church its of his mercy you are not consumed, his mercies are new every morning, and great is his faithfulness, *Lam.* 3. 23,

2. As you have seen it actually fulfilling the promises for your preservation, so you may see it making good all the promises in his word for your support in troubles. That is a sweet promise, *Psal.* 91. 15. *I will be with him in trouble: I will deliver him*, you have also a very supporting promise in *Isa.* 41. 10. *Fear not thou, for I am with thee: be not dismayed for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.*

●, how evidently hath the faithfulness of God shone forth in the performance of his word to you in this respect! you are his witnesses, you would have sunk in the deep waters of trouble if it had not been so. So speaks *David* *Psal.* 73. 26. *My heart and my flesh faileth, but God is the strength of my heart; and my portion for ever.* Have you not found it so with you as it is in 2 *Cor.* 12. 10. *Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.* God's strength hath been made perfect in your weakness, by this you have been carried through all your troubles; hitherto hath he helped you.

3. As you have seen it faithfully fulfilling the promises for your preservation, and support. So you have seen it in the direction of your way. So runs that promise, *Psal.* 32. 8. *I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.* Certain it is *That the way of man is not in himself,* Jer. 10. 23. O how faithfully hath your God guided you; and stood by you in all the difficult cases of your Life; I mean not that promise, *Heb.* 13. 5. faithfully fulfilled to a title, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* Surely you can set your seal to that in *Joh.* 17. 17. *Thy word is truth*: had you been left to your own counsels you had certainly perished; as it is said of them, in *Psal.* 81. 12. *I gave them up unto to their own hearts lusts: And they walked in their own counsels.*

4. I

4. As there are promises in the word for your preservation, support, and direction; So in the fourth place there are promises for your *provisions*; as in *Ps.* 34. 9. the Lord hath promised, *They that fear him shall not want* When they are driven to extremity, he will provide, *Isa.* 41. 17. *When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of* Israel *will not forsake them.* And is not this faithfully performed? *He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his Covenant,* Psal. 111. 5. In all the exigencies of your lives, you have found him faithful to this day; you are his witnesses that his providences never failed you, his care hath been renewed every morning for you; how great is his faithfulness?

5. You also find in the word some reviving promises for your deliverance. You have a very sweet promise in *Psal.* 91. 14. *Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him,* and again, *Psal.* 50. 15. *Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee;* you have done so, and he hath made a way to escape. Our lives are so many monuments of mercy, we have lived among Lyons, yet preserved, *Psal.* 57, 4. The burning Bush was an emblem of the Church miraculously preserved.

6. There are promises in the word for the ordering and directing all the occurrences of providence to your great advantage; so it is

promised, *Rom.* 8. 28. *That all things shall work together for good, to them that love God.* Fear not Christians, however you find it now, while you are tossing to and fro upon the unstable waves of this world; you shall find to be sure when you come to heaven, that all the troubles of your lives were guided as steddily by this promise, as ever any Ship at Sea was directed to its Port, by the compass or North-Star.

And now what remains, but what that Spirit bids you as before;

1. To enter into this Chamber of Divine Faithfulness.

2. To shut the door behind you.

3. And then to live comfortably on it in evil dayes.

1. Enter into this Chamber of God's faithfulness by faith, and hide your selves there. Every man is a Lye, but God is True, eternally and unchangeably faithful; O exercise your faith upon it, be at rest in it!

Now there are two great and weighty Arguments to press you to enter into this Chamber of divine faithfulness.

1. *Arg.* Is fetched from the nature of GOD, who cannot lye, *Titus* 1. 2. *He is not as man, that he should lye.* Numb. 23. 19. *Neither the son of man that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?* Remember upon what everlasting steddy ground; the faithfulness of GOD is built. These are immutable things, *Heb.* 6. 18. This *Abraham* built upon, *Rom.* 4. 21. Being fully

fully perſwaded, that what he had promiſed, he was able alſo to perform. He accounteth him faithful that promiſed. What would you expect or require in the perſon that you are to truſt? You would,

1. Expect a clear promiſe, and lo, you have a thouſand all the Scripture over; fitted to all the caſes of your Souls and Bodies. This you may plead with God, as *David*, Pſal. 119. 49. *Remember the word unto thy Servant, upon which thou haſt cauſed me to hope.* So *Jacob* pleaded, *Gen.* 32. 12. *Thou ſaidſt, I will ſurely do thee good.* Theſe are Gods Bonds and Obligations.

2. You would expect ſufficient power to make good what he promiſeth. This is in God as a fair foundation of faith, *Iſa.* 26. 4. *Truſt ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting ſtrength*; Becauſe of thy ſtrength we will wait on thee. Creatures cannot, but God can do what he will.

3. You would expect infinite goodneſs and mercy inclining him to help and ſave you; why? So it is here, *Pſal.* 130. 7. *Let Iſrael hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy: and with him is plenteous redemption.* So *Moſes*, Exod. 33. 18. *I beſeech thee, ſhew me thy glory.* The requeſt was a view of God's Glory. The anſwer is, my goodneſs ſhall paſs before thee, which hints to us, that though all God's Attributes be glorious, yet that, he moſt glories in, is his goodneſs: And then,

4. You would expect that none of his Promiſes were ever blotted or ſtained by his un-

hfulneſs at any time, and ſo it is here, *Joſh.* 23. 14. *not one thing hath failed*, all are come to paſs, all ages have ſealed this concluſion, *Thy word is truth, thy word is truth.*

2. *Arg.* Beſides all this you have the encouragement of all former experiences both others and your own, as a ſecond Argument to preſs you to enter into this Chamber of ſafety, the Faithfulneſs of God.

1. You have the experiences of others, Saints have reckoned the experiences of others that lived a thouſand years before them, as excellent arguments to quicken their Faith. So *Hoſ.* 12. 4. He had power over the Angel and prevailed, he found him in *Bethel* and there he ſpake, Remember there was a *Joſeph* with us in Priſon, a *Jeremy* in the Dungeon, a *Daniel* in the Den, a *Peter* in Chains, an *Hezekiah* upon the brink of the Grave; and they all found the help of God moſt faithfully protecting them and ſaving them in all their troubles. Suitable to this is that in *Pſal.* 22. 4, 5. *Our fathers truſted in thee; they truſted and thou deliveredſt them; they cried unto thee and were delivered, they truſted in thee and were not confounded.*

2. Your own experiences may encourage your faith: So *David* did, 1 *Sam.* 17. 37. *The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the Lyon, and out of the paw of the Bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philiſtine.* So did *Paul's* experience encourage his Faith, in 2 *Cor.* 1. 10. *Who delivered us from ſo great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we truſt that he will yet deliver us.*

That

Thus enter into the *faithfulneſs* of God by Faith.

2. Let me beg you to be ſure to ſhut the doors behind you, againſt all unbelieving doubts, jealouſies, and ſuſpicions of the faithfulneſs of God; the beſt men may find temptations of that nature; ſo did good *Aſaph* though an eminent Saint, *Pſal.* 77. 78. *Will the Lord caſt off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promiſe fail for ever more?* Theſe jealouſies are apt to creep in upon the minds of men, eſpecially when,

1. God delays to anſwer our prayers as ſoon as we expect the return of them, we are all in haſte for a ſpeedy anſwer, forgetting that ſeaſons of prayer are our ſeed-times; and when we have ſown that precious ſeed, we muſt wait for the Harveſt, as the Husbandman doth. Even a precious *Heman* may find a faint qualm of unbelief and diſpondency ſeizing him by the long ſuſpenſions of Gods anſwers, *Pſal.* 88. 9, 10, 11.

2. 'Twill be hard to ſhut the door upon unbelief, when all things in the eye of our ſenſe and reaſon ſeem to work againſt the Promiſe. It will require an *Abraham*'s Faith at ſuch a time to glorifie *God* by believing in hope againſt hope, *Rom.* 4. 18 If ever thou hop'ſt to enjoy the ſweet repoſe and reſt of a Chriſtian in evil times, thou muſt reſolve whatever thine eyes do ſee, or thy ſenſes report, to hold faſt this as a moſt ſure concluſion; God is faithful, and his word is ſure, and that although *clouds and darkneſs be round about him, yet righteouſneſs and judgement are the habitation of his throne,* *Pſal.* 97. 2.

O that you would once learn to keep house upon Gods Faithfulness, and fetch your daily reliefs and supports thence, whensoever you are pressed and assaulted; either,

1. *By Spiritual troubles;* When you walk in darkness and have no light, then you are to live by acts of trust and recumbency upon the most faithful One, *Isa.* 50. 10. Or,

2. By Temporal distresses, so did the people of God of old, *Hab.* 3. 17, 18. He lived by faith on this Attribute when all visible comforts and supplies were out of sight.

But especially let me warn and caution you against five principal enemies, to your repose upon the Faithfulness of GOD, *Viz.*

1. Distracting cares, which divide the mind, and eat out the peace and comfort of the heart, and which is worst of all, they reflect very dishonourably upon GOD, who hath pledged his Faithfulness and Truth for our security; against which I pray you bar the door by those two Scriptures, *Phil.* 4. 6. *Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto GOD.* And that in 1 *Pet.* 5. 7. *Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.*

2. Bar the door against unchristian despondency, another enemy to the sweet repose of your Souls in this comfortable and quiet Chamber of Divine Faithfulness; you will find this unbecoming and uncomfortable distemper of mind, insinuating and creeping in upon you, except you believe and reason it out, as David did,

did, *psal.* 42. 11. *Why art thou cast down O my soul, and why disquieted within within me? Hope thou in God for I shal yet praise him.*

3. Bar the door of your heart against carnal policies and sinful shifts, which war against your own faith, and Gods Faithfulness, as much as any other enemy whatsoever. This was the fault of good *David* in a day of trouble, 1 *Sam.* 27. 1. *And* David *said in his heart, I shal now perish one day by the hand of* Saul; *there is nothing better for me than that* I *should speedily escape into the land of the* Philistines. Alas poor *David*, nothing better than this? Time was when thou couldst think on a better way, when thou couldst say *at what time* I *am afraid I will trust in thee.* How dost thou forget thy self in this strait? Doth thy old refuge in GOD fail thee now? Can the *Philistines* secure thee better than the *promises*? Wilt thou fly from thy best friend, to thy worst enemies? but what need we wonder at *David*, who find the same distemper almost unavoidable to our selves in like cases?

4. Shut the door against discontents at, and murmurings against the dispositions of Providence, what ever you feel or fear; I perswade you not to a *Stoical Apathy*, and senselesness of the evils of the times, that would preclude the exercise of *Patience*: If the Martyrs had all had the dead palsie before they came to the fire, their Faith and Patience had not triumphed so gloriously as they did; but on the contrary, beware of grudgings against the ways and will of GOD, than which nothing militates more against your

Faith

Faith and the peace and quietneſs of your hearts.

5. To conclude, ſhut the door againſt all ſuſpicions and jealouſies of the firmneſs and ſtability of the promiſes, when you find all ſenſible comforts ſhaking and trembling under your feet; have a care of ſuch dangerous queſtions as that *Pſal.* 77. 8. *Doth his promiſe fail?* Theſe are the things which undermine the foundation both of your faith and comfort.

3. In a word, Having ſheltered your Souls in this Chamber of reſt, and thus ſhut the doors behind you; all that you have to do, is to take your reſt in God, and enjoy the pleaſure of an reſigned Soul into the hands of a Faithful Creator by oppoſing the Faithfulneſs of God, to all the fickleneſs and unfaithfulneſs you will daily find in men, *Mica.* 7. 6, 7. Yea to the weakneſs and fading of your own natural ſtrength and ability, *Pſal.* 73. 26. *My fleſh and my heart faileth, but God is the ſtrength of my heart and my portion for ever.* And ſo much of the *Third Chamber* prepared for Believers in the Name of their God.

CHAP. IX.

Opening to Believers the Unchangeableneſs of God, as a Fourth Chamber of Refuge and Reſt in times of trouble.

SECT. I.

IT is ſaid, Prov. 9. 1. *Wiſdom hath builded her houſe, ſhe hath hewen out her ſeven pillars.* (*i. e.*

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She hath raised her whole building upon solid and stable foundations, for indeed the strength of every building is according to the ground work upon which it is erected, *Debile fundamentum fallit opus.* The wisdom and Love of God have built an house for a refuge & Sanctuary to Believers in tempestuous and evil times, containing many pleasant and comfortable Chambers prepared for their lodgings, till the calamities be overpast; three of them have been already opened, *viz.* The Power, Wisdom, and Ftithfulness of God.

The last of which leads into a fourth much like unto it, namely the *Unchangeableness* of God; wherein his people may find as much rest and comfort amidst the vicissitudes of this unstable World, as in any of the forme. This world is compared, Rev. 15. 2. to *A sea of glass mingled with fire.* A Sea for its turbulency and instability, a Sea of glass for the brittleness and frailty of every thing in it; and a Sea of glass mingled with fire, to represent the sharp sufferings and fiery trials, with which the Saints are exercised here below. The only support and comfort we have against the fickleness and instability of the Creature, is the Unchangeableness of God. There is a two-fold changeableness in the Creature:

1. Natural, the effect of Sin.
2. Sinful, in its own Nature.

1. Natural,

1. Natural, let in by the fall upon all the Creation; by reaſon whereof the ſweeteſt Creature is but a fading flower, *Pſal.* 102. 26. Time like a Moth frets out the beſt wrought garment with which we cloath and deck our ſelves in this World, *Temporalia rapit tempus.* Our moſt pleaſant enjoyments, Wives, Children, Eſtates, like the Gourd in which *Jonas* to delighted himſelf, may wither in a night; Sin rings the changes all the world over.

2. Sinful, from the falſeneſs, inconſtancy, deceitfulneſs of the Creature; *Solomon* puts a hard queſtion which may poſe the whole World to anſwer it, *Prov.* 20. 6. *A faithful man who can find;* The meaning is a man of perfect and universal Faithfulneſs, is a *Phœnix* ſeldom or never to be found in this world; for when a queſtion in Scripture is moved and let fall again without any anſwer, then the ſence is Negative; but though the believer deſpair of finding an unchangeable man, it is his happineſs and comfort to find an Unchangeable God.

The Unchangeableneſs of God will appear three ways,

1. By Scripture Emblems.
2. By Scripture Aſſertions.
3. By convincing Arguments.

1. By Scripture *Emblems*, remarkable to our purpoſe is that place, *James* 1. 17. Where God is called *The Father of lights, with whom is no variableneſs, neither ſhaddow of turning.* Now variableneſs

ableneſs the word is in the *Greek*, an Aſtronomical term, commonly applyed to the Heavenly Bodies which have their *Parallaxes*, *i. e.* their Declinations, Revolutions, Viciſſitudes, Eclipſes, Increaſes and Decreaſes; but God is a Sun that never riſes nor ſets, but is everlaſtingly and unchangeably one and the ſame; with him is no variableneſs nor ſhadow of turning, παρ' ᾧ οὐκ ἔνι παραλλαγὴ ἢ τροπῆς ἀποσκίασμα. The Sun in its *Zenith* caſts no ſhadow it is the *Tropick*, or turning of its courſe, that cauſes the ſhadow; the very *ſubſtance* of turning is with man; but not the leaſt *ſhadow* of turning with God. And in *Deut.* 32. 4. *Moſes* tells us, *God is a rock, and his work is perfect.* And indeed perfect working neceſſarily follows a perfect Beeing: Now there is nothing found in Nature more ſolid, fixed, and immutable, than a rock; the firmeſt buildings will decay, a few ages will make them a ruinous heap; but though one age paſs away and another comes, the rocks abide where, and what they were; *Our God is the rock of ages*; and yet one ſtep higher, in *Zech.* 6. 1. His decrees and purpoſes are called Mountains of Braſs, that is, moſt firm, durable, and unchangeable purpoſes: Thus the Immutability of God is ſhadowed forth to us in Scripture Emblems.

2. The ſame alſo you will find in plain poſitive Scripture Aſſertions; ſuch are theſe that follow, *Mal.* 3. 6. I *am the* Lord, I *change not, therefore ye ſons of* Jacob *are not conſumed.* And *Job* 23. 13. *He is in one mind, and who can turn him?* Men are in one mind to day, & another to mor-

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row; the winds are not more variable than the minds of men: But God is in one mind, the purpoſes of his heart never change. *Thou art the ſame*, or as ſome tranſlate, *Thou art thy ſelf for ever*, *Pſal.* 112. 27. Thus when *Moſes* deſired to know his name that he might tell *Pharaoh* from whom he came; the anſwer is, *I am hath ſent me*, *Exod.* 3 14. not I was, or I will be, but *I am that I am*, noteing the Abſolute unchangeableneſs of his Nature.

3. The Unchangeableneſs of God is fully proved by convincing arguments which Divines commonly draw from ſuch *Topicks* as theſe, viz.

1. The Perfection of his goodneſs,
2. The Purity of his Nature,
3. The Glory of his Name.

1. *Arg* From the Perfection of his Goodneſs and Bleſſedneſs, God is *Optimus Maximus*, the beſt and chiefeſt good, and in that ſenſe, *There is none good but one which is God*, *Mark* 10. 18. From whence it is thus argued, If there be any change in God, that change muſt either be for the better, or for the worſe, or into a ſtate equal with that he poſſeſſed before.

But not for the better, for then he could not be the chief good; nor for the worſe, for then he muſt ceaſe to be God, the perfection of whoſe Nature is perfectly excluſive of all defects; nor into an equal ſtate of goodneſs with that he poſſeſſed before; that notion would involve *Polytheiſm*, and ſuppoſe two Firſt and equal Beings, beſides

beſides the vanity of ſuch a change would be abſolutely repugnant to the wiſdom of God.

Therefore with the Father of lights can be no variableneſs nor ſhadow of turning.

2. *Arg.* The Unchangeableneſs of God may be evinced from the Purity, ſincerity, and uncompoundneſs of his Beeing, in which their neither is, nor can be the leaſt mixture, he being a pure act. From whence it is thus argued;

If there be any change in God, that change muſt be made either by ſomething without himſelf; or by ſomething within himſelf, or by both together.

But it cannot be by any thing without himſelf; for in him all created dependent Beings live and move, and enjoy the Beeings they have; and all the changes that are among them, are from the pleaſure of this unchangeable Beeing, he changeth them, but it is not poſſible for him, upon whoſe pleaſure they ſo intirely and abſolutely depend, both as to their Beeings, and workings to ſuffer any change himſelf from, or by them.

Nor can any ſuch change be made upon God by any thing within himſelf; for that would ſuppoſe action and paſſion, *movens & motum* a mixture and compoſition in his Nature, which is abſolutely rejected and excluded by the ſimplicity and purity thereof: ſeeing therefore it can neither be from any power without him, nor any mixture within him, there can be no change at all made on him.

3. *Arg.* That is by no means to be aſcribed

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to God, which at once eclipses the glory of his name, and overthrows the hopes and comforts of all his people.

But so would the supposition of mutability in God do, this would level him with the vain changeable creature; whereas it is a principal part of his glory, that *he is not as man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent*, Num. 23. 19. This also would overthrow the hopes and comforts of all his people, which are built upon this Attribute as upon their stable and solid foundation: Among diverse other we find three principal priviledges of the people of God built upon his Immutability, viz.

1. Their Perseverance in Grace.
2. Their Comfort in the Promises.
3. Their Hopes of Eternal Life.

1. Their perseverance in Grace is built upon the foundation of Gods unchangableness; one main reason why Christians never repent of their choice of Christ and the ways of Godliness is because the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, Rom. 11. 29. Should God but once repent of the gifts of grace he hath bestowed on us, and alter in his love towards us, how soon would our love to God, and delight in God vanish, as the image in the glass doth when the man that looked upon it hath once turned away his face?

2. All their comfort in the promises is built upon Gods unchangeableness. The promise

are the ſprings of conſolation; ſhould they fail and dry up, the whole world could not afford them one drop of Spiritual comfort to refreſh their thirſty Souls; the ſtrength of our conſolation immediately reſults from the ſtability and firmneſs of the Scripture promiſes, *Heb.* 6. 18.

3. Their hopes of eternal life depends upon the unchangeableneſs of God that hath promiſed, *Tit.* 1. 2. *In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promiſed before the world began.* Take away then the Immutability of God, and you at once darken and eclipſe his glory, and overturn the perſeverance, conſolations, and hopes of all his people; but bleſſed be God theſe things are built upon firm foundations.

1. His Nature is unchangeable, *Thou art the ſame for ever, pſal.* 102. 27. The Heavens though they be the pureſt, and therefore the moſt durable and unchangeable part of the creation; yet they ſhal periſh and wax old, and be changed as a veſture, but our God is the ſame for ever.

2. His power is unchangeable; *Iſa.* 59. 1. *The Lords hand is not ſhortened.* Time will enfeeble the ſtrongeſt creature, and cut ſhort the power of the hands of the mighty, they cannot do in their decrepit age as they were wont to do in their youthful and vigorous age; but the Lords hand never is, nor can be ſhortened.

3. The Conſels and purpoſes of his heart are unchangeable, *pſal.* 33. 81. *The counſel of the Lord ſtandeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations,*

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4. The goodness, truth, and mercy of God are Unchangeable, *Psal.* 100. 5. *The Lord is good, his mercy is everlasting, and his truth endureth to all generations.*

5. The word of God is unchangeable. though all flesh be as grass, and the goodness thereof as the flower of the field, yet the word of our God shall stand for ever; all the promises contained therein are sure and steadfast: Not yea and nay, but yea and Amen for ever, 2*Cor.* 1. 2.

6. The love of God is an Unchangeable love. Jer. 31. 3. *Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love.*

7. In a word, all the gracious Pardons of God are unchangeable, as they are full without exceptions, so they are final Pardons without any revocation. *I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their iniquities and sins will I remember no more, Heb.* 8. 12. And thus much briefly of Gods unchangeableness absolute considered in it self.

SECT. II.

LEt us next consider, and believingly view the Unchangeableness of God in its respects and relation.

1. To his Promises.

2. To his Providences.

1. The Immutability of God gives down comforts to Believers through the Promise, where is no other way by which they can have comfortable admission into this Chamber or Attribu-

tribute of God; and there are six sorts of promises in the word; by which it is highly improvable to their support and comfort in an evil day. For 1. The unchangeable *God* hath engaged himself by promise to be with his people in all times and in all streights, *Heb.* 13: 5. *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* The life, joy, and comfort of a Believer lies in the bosom of that Promise, the conclusion of Faith from thence is sweet and sure; If I shall never be forsaken of my God, let Hell and Earth do their worst, I can never be miserable.

2. The Unchangeable God hath promised to maintain their graces, and thereby his interest in them for ever, Jer. 32.40. *And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shal not depart from me.* Where the Lord undertakes for both parts in the Covenant, his own and theirs; I will not turn away from them, O unexpressible mercy! Yea, but Lord, may the poor Believer say, that is not so much my fear, as that my treacherous heart will turn away from thee. No saith, God I will take care for that also; I will put my fear into thy heart, and thou shalt never depart from me.

3. The Unchangeable God hath promised to establish the Covenant with them for ever; so that those who are once taken into that gracious Covenant shall never be turned out of it again, *Isa.* 54. 10. *The mountains shal depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee,*

thee, neither ſhall the covenant of my peace be rem
ed, ſaith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.

4. The Unchangeable God hath ſecured
loving kindneſs to his people by promiſe und
all the tryals, and ſmarting rods of afflictio
with which he chaſtens them in this world;
hath reſerved to himſelf the liberty of afflict
them, but bound himſelf by promiſe never
remove his favour from them, *Pſa.* 89. 33, 3
will viſit their tranſgreſſion with the rod, and
iniquity with ſtripes, nevertheleſs my loving kin
will I not take from them, nor ſuffer my faithfu
to fail.

5. The promiſes of a joyful reſurrection
the dead are grounded upon the Immutabi
of God, *Matth:* 22. 32. I *am the God of* Abra
the God of Iſaac, *and the God of* Jacob; *God*
the God of the dead, but the God of the living. He
hath made a great change upon them, but
upon their God: though they be not, he i
the ſame, therefore they are not loſt in de
but ſhall aſſuredly be found again in the re
rection.

6. To conclude, the promiſes of the Sa
eternal happineſs with God in Heaven, are f
ded in his Immutability, 1 *Cor.* 1. 8, 9. Ti
By all which you ſee what a pleaſant lodg
prepared for the Saints in the unchangeable
miſes of God, amidſt all the changes and
rations here below.

2. Once more, let us view the unchange
neſs of God in his Providences towards his
ple, what ever changes it makes upon us,

whatever changes we ſeem to diſcern in it, nothing is more certain than this, that it holds one and the ſame tenor, purſues one and the ſame deſign in all that it doth upon us, or about us. Providences indeed are very variable, but the deſigns and ends of God in them all are invariable, and the ſame for ever. It is noted in *Ezek.* 1. 12. that *The wheels went ſtraight forward, whither the ſpirit was to go, they went, and they turned not when they went.* As it is in Nature ſo in Providence, you have one day fair, halcyon, and bright, another dark and full of ſtorm, one ſeaſon hot, another cold; but all theſe ſerve to one and the ſame end and deſign to make the earth fruitful; and the aim of all providences is to make you holy and happy: That is a ſweet Promiſe, *Rom.* 8. 28. *All things ſhall work together for good to them that love God.* This is the compaſs by which all Providences ſteer their courſe, as a Ship at Sea, doth by the *Card*; but more particularly, let us note the unchangeableneſs of God in his Providences of all kinds, *effective* and *premiſſive*. and ſee in them all his unchangeable righteouſneſſe and goodneſs.

1. It muſt needs be ſo, conſidering the unchangeableneſs of his decree, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. *The foundation of GOD ſtandeth ſure.* Providences ſerve, but never fruſtrate, execute but cannot make void the decree; ſo that you may ſay of the moſt afflicting Providences, as *David* doth of the ſtormy winds, *Pſal.* 148. 8. they all fulfil his word.

2. The Wisdom of GOD proves it, he will not suffer his works or permissions to clash with his designs and purposes : Divine Wisdom shews it self in the steddy direction of all things to the ultimate end. To open this in some particulars, consider,

1. Doth the Lord permit wicked men to rage and insult, persecute, and vex his people? Yet all this while Providence is in its right way, it walks in as direct a line to your good, as when it is in a more pleasant path of Peace, *Jer.* 24. 5. *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, like those good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for their good.* *Israel* was sent to *Babylon* for their good. That improves your faith and patience, *Rev.* 13. 10. Here is the patience and faith of the Saints. So *Rom.* 5. 2, 3. *By whom also we have access by faith into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoyce in hope of the glory of God; and not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience.* By this you are weaned from and mortified to this World.

2. Doth the Lord in his Providence order many and frequent, close and smarting afflictions for you? Why lo, here is the same design managing as effectually, as if all the peace and prosperity in the World were ordered for you. The face of Providence indeed is not the same, but the love of GOD is still the same, he loves you as much when he smites, as when he smiles on you; for what are his ends in afflicting you

as

and what the ſanctified fruits of your afflicti-ons? Is it not?

1. To purge your iniquities, *Iſa.* 27. 9. *By this therefore ſhal the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his ſin.*

2. To reduce your hearts to God, *Pſal.* 119. 67. *Before I was afflicted I went aſtray, but now have I kept thy word.*

3. To quicken you to your duties, let the beſt man be without afflictions and he will quickly grow dull in the way of his duty.

4. Doth God let looſe the chain of Satan to tempt and buffet you? Yet is he ſtill the ſame God to you as before; for do but obſerve his ends in that permiſſion, and you will find, that by thoſe things the Lord is leading you towards that deſired aſſurance of his love which your Souls long after. Few Chriſtians attain to any conſiderable ſettlement of Soul, but by ſuch ſhakings and combates; the end of theſe permiſſions is to put you to your Knees, and blow up a greater flame and fervour of Spirit in prayer, 2 *Cor.* 13. 8. So that eventually theſe permiſſions of Providence prove ſingular advantages, and bleſſings to you.

SECT. III.

WHat remains then, ſeeing God is unchangeable in his love to his People, purſuing the great ends of all his gracious promiſes in a ſteddy courſe of Providence wherein he will never effect, or permit any thing that is really repugnant to his own glory or their good; but that we enter alſo into this Chamber of Reſt

ſhut the doors about us, and comfortably improve the unchangeablenes of *God*, while we ſee nothing but changes and troubles here below.

1. Enter into Gods Unchangeableneſs by faith, take up your lodgings in this ſweet Attribute alſo; and to encourage your Faith thereunto, ſeriouſly conſider a few particulars.

1. Conſider how conſtant, firm, and unchangeable God hath been to his people in all times and ſtreights; not one among many thouſands of his people that are paſſed on before you, but by frequent and certain experience have found him ſo. What a ſingular encouragement ſhold this be to our faith in the caſe before us? *pſal.* 9. 10. *They that know thy name, will put their truſt in thee, for thou Lord haſt not forſaken them that ſeek thee.* So *Iſa.* 25. 4. *Thou haſt been a ſtrength to the poor, a ſtrength to the needy in his diſtreſs, a refuge from the ſtorm, a ſhadow from the heat, when the blaſt of the terrible ones is as the ſtorm againſt the wall.* Neither is their any thing in your experienc contradictory to the encouraging reports others have made of God; you muſt acknowledge, that notwithſtanding your own changeableneſs who have hardly been able to maintain your hearts in any Spiritual frame towards God for one day together, yet his mercies towards you have been new every morning, and great hath been his Faithfulneſs: You have often turned aſide from the way of your duty, and have not followed God in a ſtedy courſe of obedience, and yet for all that, his goodneſs and mercy have followed you all the days of your life, as it is *Pſal.* 23. 6.

2. Consider how often you have doubted and mistrusted the unchangeableness of God, and been forced with shame and sorrow to retract your folly therein; God hath many times convinc'd you that his love to you is an unchangeable love, how many changes soever in the course of his Providence have passed over you; consult *Isa.* 49. 14. and *psal.* 77. 78. and see how the cases parallel both in respect of Gods constancy to them and you, and the inconstancy of his peoples Faith then, and yours now; your fears and doubts are the same with theirs, though his goodness and love have been as unchangeable to you as ever it was towards them.

3. Consider the Advocateship and intercession of Jesus Christ in heaven for you; by vertue whereof the favour and love of God becomes unalterable towards his people. If any thing can be supposed to cool or quench the love of God towards you, nothing in the world is more like to do it, than your sin, and this indeed is that, which you fear will estrange and alienate the heart of your God from you. But Reader, if thou be one that sincerely mournest for all the grief and dishonour of God by thy sin, applyest the bloud of sprinkling to thy *Soul* by Faith, and makest mortification and watchfulness thy daily business; comfort thy self against that fear from that singular encouragement given thee in this case, 1 *John* 2. 1, 2. *My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not, and if any man sin, we have an*

Advocat with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins. Look as the *death of Christ healed the great breach betwixt God and thy Soul*, by thy reconciliation at first; so the powerful Intercession of Christ in heaven effectually prevents all new breaches betwixt GOD and thy Soul afterwards, so that he will never totally and finally cast thee off again.

2. Shut the door behind you against all objections, scruples, and questionings of Gods immutability, and by a resolved and steddy Faith maintain the honour of God in this point by thy constant adherence to it and dependence upon it, and especially see that thou give him the glory of his unchangeableness.

1. When thou shalt see the greatest alterations and changes made by his Providence in the World. What though thou shouldest live to see all things turned upside down, the foundations out of course, all things drawing into a Sea of confusion and trouble! Yet in the midst of those publick distractions and distress of Nations: Encourage thou thy self in this, thy GOD and his love to his people is the same for ever, *Psal.* 46. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved.*

2. Live by Faith upon Gods unchangeableness under the greatest changes of your own condition in this world: providence may make great alterations upon all your outward comforts,

it may caſt you down, how dear ſoever you be to God; from riches into poverty, from health into ſickneſs, from honour into reproach, from liberty into bondage? thou mayeſt overlive thy comfortable relations, and of a *Naomi* become a *Marah*; *Thou haſt lifted me up, and caſt me down*; ſaid as good man as you, *Pſal.* 102. 10. Yet ſtill it is your duty, and will be your great priviledge in the midſt of all theſe changes, to act your faith upon the never changing GOD, as that holy man did, *Hab.* 3. 17. *Although the Fig-tree ſhal not bloſſom, neither fruit be in the vine; the labour of the olive ſhal fail, and the fields ſhal yield no meat; the flocks ſhal be cut off from the fold, and there ſhal be no herd in the ſtalls; yet will I rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my ſalvation. q. d.* Suppoſe a thouſand diſapointments of my earthly hopes, yet will I maintain my hope in God. O Chriſtian, with how many yets, notwithſtandings, and nevertheleſſes, muſt thy faith bear up in times of trouble, or thou'l ſink?

3. See thou live upon Gods unchangeableneſs, when age and ſickneſs ſhall inform thee, that thy great change is at hand; though thy heart and thy fleſh fail, comfort thy ſelf with this, thy God will never fail thee, *Pſal.* 73. 16. O GOD, ſaith *David, thou haſt taught me from my youth, and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works, now alſo when I am old and gray headed, forſake me not, pſal.* 71. 17, 18.

4. Live upon the unchangeableneſs of God under the greateſt and ſaddeſt changes of your *ſpiritual condition*, God may cloud the light of

his countenance over thy Soul, he may fill thee with fears and troubles, and the comforter that should relieve thee, may seem to be far off; yet still maintain thy faith in the unchangeableness of his loves; trust in the name of the Lord, stay thy self upon thy God when thou walkest in darkness and hast no light; *Isa.* 50. 10. Thus shut thy door.

3. Improve the unchangeableness of God to thy best advantage in the worst times, by drawing thence such comfortable conclusions as these:

1. If God be an unchangeable God in his promises, and in his love to his people, what should hinder but the people of God may live happily and comfortably in the saddest times, and greatest troubles upon earth. *As sorrowful, yet always rejoycing, as poor, yet making many rich, having nothing, and yet possessing all things,* 2 Cor. 6. 10. Certainly nothing ought to quench Christians mirth that is not able to separate him from the love of Christ, *Rom.* 8, 35.

2. If God be an unchangeable God in his love to his people; then it becomes all that have special interest in this God, to be unchangeable and immoveable in the ways of their obedience towards him: God will not cast you off, see that you cast not off your duties, no not when they are surrounded with difficulties; he loves you, though you often grieve him by sin, see that you still love him, though he often grieve and burden you by affliction; he will own you for his people under the greatest contempt

tempts and reproaches of the World; see that you own and honour his ways, and truths when you are under most reproach from a vile world.

CHAP. X.

Opening the Care of God for his people in times of trouble, as the fifth Chamber of Rest to Believers.

SECT. I.

CAre in the general Notion of it, as it is applyed to the Creature, imports the studiousness, and solicitousness of our thoughts, for the safety and welfare of our selves, or those we love, and highly value. Now though there be no such thing properly in God, at whose dispose and pleasure all events are, and to whose counsels and appointments all difficulties must give way, yet he is pleased to accommodate himself to our weakness, and express his regard and love to his people, by such things, as one creature doth to another to which it is endeared by relation or affection. To this purpose we find many significant, Synonomous expressions in Scripture, all importing the care of God over his people in a pleasant variety of notion and expression, as *Nah.* 1. 7. *The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth*

them that trust in him. He knoweth them, *i.e.* he hath a special, tender, and careful eye upon them, to see their wants supplyed, and to protect them in all their dangers; for in the common and general sense, he knoweth them that trust not in him, as well as those that do; and further to clear this sense of the place, it is said, *Psal.* 40. 17. *The* Lord *thinketh on them,* Importing not only simple cogitation, but the immoration or abiding of his thoughts upon them, as our thoughts are wont to do, upon that which we highly esteem, especially when any danger is near it. And yet farther to clear this sense, it is said, *Job.* 36. 7. *He withdraweth not his eye from the righteous.* As when *Moses* was exposed in the Ark of Bulrushes, where his life was in eminent hazards by the waters of *Nilus* upon one side, and the *Egyptian cut-throats* on the other; his sister *Miriam* kept watch at a distance, to see what would be done to him. Her eye was never off that Ark wherein her dear Brother lay; fear and care engaged her eye to keep a true watch for him. Thus the Lord withdraweth not his eye from the righteous. To the same purpose is that expression, *Deut.* 33. 3. *Yea, he hath loved people; all his Saints are in thy hand.* That which we dearly love & prize above ordinary, we keep in our own hands for its security, as not thinking it safe enough in any other hand or place. And once more, *Isaiah* 49. 16. GOD is said to engrave them upon the palms of his Hands, alluding to what is customary among men,

who

who when they would charge their memorie with something of special concernment, use to change a Ring, or bind a Threed about the Finger, to put them in mind of it. Thus is the care of our God expressed to us in the Scripture notions. The amount of all which, is given us in that one proper and full expression of the Apostle, 1 Pet. 5. 7. *He careth for you*, To open this Chamber of *Divine care* as a place of sweetest rest, to our anxious and perplexed minds, in times of difficulty and hazard, it will be necessary that you seriously ponder;

1. The Grounds and Reasons
2. The Extent and Compass
3. The Lovely Properties

of the care of God.

1. The grounds and reasons of Gods care for his people; which are,

1. The strict and dear Relations in which he is pleased to own them. Believers are his children, and you know how naturally children engage and draw forth the Fathers care for them. This is the argument that Christ uses, *Mat.* 6. 31, 32. *Therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? Or what shall we drink? Or wherewithall shall we be cloathed? For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.* Children, especially when young, disquiet not themselves about provisions for back and belly, but leave that to the care of their Parents, from whom by the tye and bonds of Nature, and Love, they expect provision for all those

thoſe wants: Every one takes care for his own; much more doth God for his own Children, and indeed he expects his children ſhould live upon his care; as our children in their minority, do upon ours.

2. Gods precious eſtimation and value of them, engages his conſtant care for them. Believers are his Jewels, *Mal.* 3. 17. his peculiar people, 1 *Pet.* 2. 6. his ſpecial portion or treaſure in this world, *Deut.* 32. 9. and as ſuch he prizes and eſteems them above all the people of the earth, and accordingly exerciſeth his ſpecial care in all the dangers they are here expoſed to. Special love engageth peculiar care.

3. The dangers and fears of the people of God, in this world, are many and great, and were it not for the Lords aſſiduous and tender care over them, they muſt neceſſarily be ruined, both in ſoul and body, by them. The Church is God's Vineyard, its Enemies as ſo many wild Boars to root it up: Upon this account, he ſaith, *Iſa.* 27. 3. *I the Lord do keep it, leſt any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.* And indeed it is well for *Iſrael*, that he that keepeth it, never ſlumbereth nor ſleepeth, *Pſal.* 121. 4. that our houſes are in peace, that we and our dear relations fall not as a prey, into cruel and bloody hands, skilful to deſtroy, that we find any reſt or comfort in ſo evil and dangerous a world, it is wholly and only to be aſcribed to the care of God over us, and ours.

4. Jeſus Chriſt hath ſolemnly recommended all

all the people of God, to his particular care. It was one of the laſt expreſſions of Chriſts love to them at the parting hour, *Joh.* 17 11. *And now I am no more in the world, but theſe are in the world; and I come to thee: Holy Father, keep through thine own name thoſe whom thou haſt given me, q. d.* While I have been perſonally preſent with them, I took the ſame care of them; as a Shepheard doth of his Flock, or a tender Father of his Children: but now I muſt leave them in the world, and in the midſt of a world of dangers, fears and troubles, againſt which they can make no proviſion or defence themſelves. Father remember them, look after them, when I ſhall be removed from them, they are thine, as well as mine; and I recommend them with my laſt breath to thy care and protection. This is a ſpecial ground alſo of Gods care for them.

5. Believers dayly caſt themſelves upon the care of God, and reſign themſelves unto it in their dayly Prayers. And by their often renewed acts of Faith, than which no act is found more engaging from the creature upon its *God*; though there be nothing of merit, yet there is much of engaging-efficacy in it, *Iſa.* 26. 3. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee: becauſe he truſteth in thee.* We find it ſo among our ſelves, the more firmly and entirely any one truſteth to us, and dependeth upon us, the more he engageth us to protect or relieve him. Now this is the dayly work of Chriſtians to truſt GOD over all, and

and put all their concernments into his hand, which very truſt and dependance draws forth the care of GOD for them.

6. In a word, the many promiſes GOD hath made to his people to preſerve, ſupport and ſupply them in all the times of need, engageth the care of GOD for them, as often as ſuch wants, or dangers befal them; for indeed herein, he at once takes care for their neceſſity, and for his own honour and glory. They truſt to his word, and they rely upon his promiſes which therefore he will be careful to make good. This was the argument which the Church pleaded in the time of eminent danger, to engage the care of GOD for them, *Pſal.* 74. 20. *Have reſpect unto the Covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.* q. d. O Lord, thy people are in the midſt of cruel enemies, take care for their protection, and though there be no worth in them, to which thou ſhouldeſt have reſpect, yet have reſpect unto thine own Covenant: let the glory of thy Name draw forth thy care to thy People.

SECT. II.

WE have ſeen the grounds and reaſons of GODS care over his people, let us next view the extant and compaſs of this Divine care; and here methinks the Lord ſaith to his people, as he ſaid to *Abraham*, *Gen.* 13. 14, 15. *Lift up now thine eyes from the place where thou art, northward, and ſouthward, and eaſtward, and weſtward, for all the land which thou ſeeſt, to thee will I give it, and to thy ſeed for ever.* So here, poor

poor timorous, dejected Believer, lift up thine eyes from the place where thou art, and take a view of all the promises in the Scriptures of truth; promises of support under all burthens, supplies of all wants, deliverances out all dangers, assistances in all distresses; to thee have I given them all as a portion for ever. This care of GOD walks the round, and encompasseth the Souls and Bodies of them that fear him day and night. There is no interest or concern of either found without the line of his all-surrounding care, and every one of his children are enfolded in his Fatherly arms, *Deut.* 33. 3. *All his Saints are in thy hand.* All and every one of their wants and streights are observed by this care, in order to their supply, *Phil.* 4. 19. *My GOD shall supply all your wants.*

1. Great is the care of GOD over the Bodies of his people, and all the dangers and necessities of them as they daily grow; your meat and drink are daily provided for you by your Fathers care, Phil. 111. 5. *He hath given meat unto them that fear him; he will ever be mindful of his covenant.* It is from this care of thy heavenly Father, that necessary provisions have been made for thee, of which it may be thou hast had no foresight: This is the GOD that hath fed thee all thy life long, *Gen.* 48. 15. It is from the same care thy body hath been cloathed, *Mat.* 6. 28. *How much more shall he cloath you, O ye of little faith?* It is through this care, you sleep in peace, and your rest is made sweet unto you, *Prov.* 3. 24. *When thou lyest down*

thou

thou ſhalt not be afraid; yea, thou ſhalt lie down, and thy ſleep ſhall be ſweet. In a word, thou owest all thy recoveries from dangerous diſeaſes, and narrow eſcapes from the grave, to this care of thy God over thee, *He is the Lord that healeth thee. Exod.* 15. 26. That the incenſed humours of thy body had not overflowed their banks like an inundation of the Sea, when they raged in thy dangerous diſeaſes, is only becauſe thy God took the care of thee, and ſet them their bounds.

2. Divine Care extends it ſelf to the Souls of all that fear God, and to all the concernments of their Souls; and manifeſtly diſcovers it ſelf in all the gracious proviſions it hath made for them. More particularly, it is from the tender Fatherly care that,

1. A Saviour was provided to redeem them, when they were ruined and loſt by ſin, *Joh.* 3. 16. *Rom.* 8. 32.

2. That Spiritual cordials are provided to refreſh them in all their ſinking ſorrows, and inward diſtreſſes, *Pſal.* 94. 19.

3. That a door of deliverance is opened to them, when they are ſorely preſſed upon by temptations, and ready to be overwhelmed, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13.

4. That a ſtrength above their own comes in ſeaſonably to ſupport them, when they are almoſt overweighed with inward troubles, when great weights are upon them, the everlaſting arms are underneath them, *Pſ.* 138. 3. *Iſ.* 57. 16.

5. That

5. That their ruine is prevented when they are upon the dangerous and slippery brink of temptations, and their feet almost gone, *Psal.* 73. 12. *Hos.* 2. 6. 2 *Cor.* 12. 7.

6. That they are recovered again after dangrous falls by sin, and not left as a prey and Trophey to their enemy, *Hos.* 14. 4.

7. That they are guided and directed in the right way, when they are at a loss, and know not what course to take, *Ps.* 16. 11. *Ps.* 73. 24.

8. That they are established and confirmed in Christ in the most shaking and overturning times of trouble and persecution: so that neither their heart turneth back, nor their steps decline from his ways, *Jer.* 32. 40. *Joh.* 4. 14,

9. That they are upheld under spiritual desertions, and recovered again out of that dismal darkness in the chearful light of GODS countenance, *Isa.* 57. 16.

10. That they are at last brought safe to Heaven through the innumerable hazards and dangers all along their way thither, *Heb.* 11. 16. In all these things the care of their God eminently discovers it self for their Souls.

3. Once more let us consider the care of God for his people in the lovely properties thereof. As,

1. It is a Fatherly care, than which none is more great or tender, *Matth.* 6. 8. *Your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things.* And indeed the greatest and tendrest care of an earthly Father is but a faint shadow of that tender care which is in the heart of GOD over his Children; for to that end we find them compared

pared, *Matth.* 7. 11. *If ye then, being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them which ask him?* The care of Parents is careleſneſs it ſelf, compared with that care which GOD takes of his.

2. The care of GOD is an univerſal care watching over all his people in all ages, places and dangers, 2 *Chron.* 16. 9. *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the whole earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in behalf of them whoſe heart is perfect towards him.* This was applyed by way of proof to *Aſa*, who out of a ſinful diſtruſt of the care of GOD, relyed upon the help of Syria as if there had not been a GOD in Heaven to take care of him and the people.

3. GODS care over his, is aſſiduous and continual; *his mercies are new every morning, great is his faithfulneſs*, *Lam.* 3. 22, 23. *He keeps his people night and day*, *Iſa.* 27. 3. Could Satan, or his inſtruments find ſuch an hour wherein the ſeven eyes of Providence ſhould be all aſleep that would be the fatal hour to our Souls and Bodies; but he that keepeth *Iſrael* ſlumbers not.

4. GODS care over his, is exceeding tender far beyond the tenderneſs that the moſt affectionate Mother ever felt in her heart towards the child that hanged on her breaſt, *Iſa.* 49. 15. *Can a mother forget her ſucking child*, &c. *they may yet will not I forget thee.* The birds of the air are not ſo tender of their young in the neſt, as GOD is of his people in the World, *Iſa.* 31. 5. Mer-

Mercy fills the heart of GOD, yea tender mercy, yea, multitudes of tender mercies, *Psalm* 51. 1.

5. The care of GOD is a seasonable care, which is alwayes sure to nick the opportunity and proper season of relieving his people, in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen: The beauty of Providence is much seen in this thing, whereever you feel a want, this finds a supply; and thus much briefly of the care of GOD absolutely considered in it self.

SECT. III.

IT remains that we also consider the care of God in its twofold respect, *viz.*

1. To his Promises.
2. To his Providences.

1. There are multitudes of promises found in the Scriptures, exactly fitted as so many keys to open the door of this comfortable Chamber to receive, and secure all them that fear God, whatever their wants; fears, or distresses are. These are reducible into two Classes, or ranks, *viz.*

1. More general and comprehensive.
2. More particular Promises.

The general and more comprehensive Promises are found in the general expressures of the Covenant, as that to *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. 1. *I am God Almighty, walk thou before me and be perfect.* *q. d.* Let it be thy care to walk exactly in the paths of obedience before me, and I will take

take care to ſupply all thy wants from the neve
failing fountain of my al-ſufficiency; and a
the ſame tenour is that, 2 *Cor.* 6. 18. I will b
to them a Father, and they ſhall be my ſons an
daughters. *i. e.* Expect your proviſions an
protections from my care, as children do fro
their father. More particularly, there are ſ
ſorts of Promiſes, wherein the care of God
particularly made over to his people in th
greateſt hazards and difficulties in this life.

1. It is aſſigned and made over to them
ſupply all their needs, ſo far as the Glory of G
and advancement of their Spiritual and eter
good ſhall require it, *Pſ.* 34. 9. *They that fe
the Lord ſhall not want any good thing.* All yo
livelihood is in that Promiſe; thence com
your daily bread; your own and your famil
meat is in that cupboard.

2. It is made over to the Church and peo
of God for their defence againſt all dangers,
54. 17. *No weapon that is formed againſt thee ſ
proſper.* This promiſe wards off all the dea
blows, and puts by all the mortal thruſts t
are made at you; here the care of God form
ſelf into a Shield for your defence.

3. The care of God is engaged by prom
for the moderation and mitigation of your
flictions, that they may not exceed your abili
to bear them, *Iſa.* 27. 8, 9. *in meaſure when it ſh
eth forth, thou wilt debate with it; he ſtayeth
rough wind in the day of the eaſt-wind.* If
wind blow from a cold corner, this prom
moderates it, that it blow not a ſtorm; all
ſpun

ſparing mercies and ſweetning circumſtances, which gracious Souls thankfully note in the ſharpeſt trials come from this promiſe, wherein the care of God is engaged for that purpoſe.

4. Divine care is put under the bond of a promiſe, for the direction and guidance of all their troubles and trials to an happy iſſue, *Rom.* 8.28. *All things ſhall work together for good.* From what quarter ſoever the wind bloweth, God will take care that it ſhall be uſeful to drive you to your Port; the very Providences that caſt you down by vertue of this promiſe prove as ſerviceable and beneficial as thoſe that lift you up.

5. The care of God ſtands engaged in the promiſe for the help and aid of his people in all the extremities and exigences of their lives, *Pſal.* 46. 1. *God is our refuge and ſtrength, a very preſent help in trouble.* Never is the care of God more viſible and conſpicuous, than in ſuch times of need.

6. Laſtly, the care of God is engaged to carry his people ſafe through all the dangers of the way, and brings them all home to glory at laſt, *Joh.* 10. 28. *I give unto them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhal any man pluck them out of my hand.* This care of God thus engaged for you is your convoy to accompany and ſecure you till it ſee you ſafe into your harbour of eternal reſt.

2. You have heard how the care of God is engaged for you by promiſe; now ſee how it actuates, and exerts it ſelf for the people of God in the various methods of Providence: and here

here, oh here is the ſweeteſt pleaſure of the Chriſtians life, a delight far tranſcending all the delights of this life. Sit down Chriſtian in this Chamber alſo, and make but ſuch obſervations upon the care of thy God as follow, and then tell me whether the world with all its pleaſures and delights, can give thee ſuch another entertainment?

1. Reflect upon the conſtant, ſweet, and ſuitable proviſions that from time to time have been prepared for thee and thine, by this care of thy God; From whence ſoever thy wants did come, I am ſure from hence came thy ſupplies, it hath enabled thee to return the ſame anſwer the diſciples did to that queſtion, *Luke* 22. 35. *Lacked ye any thing, and they ſaid nothing.*

2. *Reflect with admiration upon the various difficulties of your lives, wherein your thoughts have been entangled, and out of which you have been extricated and delivered by the care of God over you. How oft have your thoughts been like a revelled skeyn of ſilk, ſo entangled and perplexed with the difficulties and fears before you, that you could find no end, but the longer you thought, the more you were puzzled, till you have left thinking; and fell to praying; and there you have found the right end to wind up all your thoughts upon the bottom of peace and ſweet contentment, according to that direction,* Pſal. 37. 5. *Commit thy way unto the Lord, truſt alſo in him, and he ſhal bring it to paſs.*

3. Obſerve with a melting heart how the care of thy *God*, hath diſpoſed and directed thy way to unforeſeen advantages; had he not ordered thy ſteps

steps when, and as he did, thou hadst not been in possession of those Temporal and Spiritual mercies that sweeten thy life at this day. Surely the steps of good men are ordered by the Lord: and as for the Christian, what reason hast thou with an heart overflowing with love and thankfulness to look up and say, *My father, thou art the guide of my youth*? It is sweet to live by faith upon Divine care. Oh what a Serene life might we live, careful for nothing, but making known our request unto God in every thing, *Phil.* 4. 6. casting all our care on him that careth for us, 1 *Pet.* 5. 7. perplexing our thoughts about nothing but rolling every burthen upon godly Faith. Thus lived holy *Musculus* when reduced to extreme poverty, and danger at the same time; then it was that he solaced his Soul with that comfortable *Distich*, a good lesson for others,

Est Deus in cœlis, qui providus omnia curat,
Credentes nusquam deseruisse potest.

The Provident care of his heavenly Father, made his heart as quiet as the child at the breast. Christian, thou knowest not what distressful days are coming upon the earth, nor what personal trials shall befal thee in this world; but I advise thee as thou valuest the tranquility & comfort of thy life: Shut up thy self by Faith in this Chamber of Divine Care, it is thy best security in this world: Reflect frequently and thankfully upon the manifold supports, supplies, and salvations thou hast already had from this fountain

tain of mercies, and be not discouraged at new difficulties. When an eminent Christian was told of some that way-laid him to destroy him; his answer was, *Si Deus mei curam non habet, quid vivo*? In like manner thou mayest say, if GOD had not taken care for thee, how couldest thou have lived till now? How coulded thou have overlived so many troubles, fears, and dangers as thou hast done?

CHAP. XI.

Opening the sixth and last Chamber, viz. The Love of GOD, as a resting place to believing Souls in evil times.

SECT. I.

THough all the Attributes in the name of Chambers of this house of GOD are glorious, and excellent; yet this of love is transcendently glorious: Of this room it may be said as it was of *Solomons* royal Chariot, *Cant.* 3. 10. *The midst thereof is paved with love.* In this Attribute the glory of GOD is signally and eminently manifested, 1 *John* 4. 9, 10. And upon this foundation the hopes and comforts of all Believers are built and founded, *Rom.* 8. 35 *Who shal separate us from the love of Christ*? *Shall tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword*? He defies and despises them all, because neither of them alone, nor

all together by their united ſtrength, can unclaſp the arms of Divine Love, in which Believers are ſafely enfolded. In this Attribute Gods people by Faith entrench themſelves, and of it a Believer ſaith, *Hic murus ahenus eſto*, this ſhall be my ſtrong hold and fortreſs in the day of trouble, and well may we ſo eſteem and reckon it, if we conſider,

1. That wherever the ſpecial love of GOD goes, there the ſpecial preſence of God goes alſo, *John* 14. 23. *He ſhall be loved of my father, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* And O how ſecure and ſafe muſt thoſe be (however times govern) with whom God himſelf maketh his abode! For as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks *Pſal.* 91. *He that dwells in the ſecreet place of the moſt high, ſhall abide under the ſhaddow of the Almighty.* And he that is overſhaddowed by an Almighty power, needs not fear how many mighty enemies combine againſt him.

2. Wherever the ſpecial love of God is placed, that perſon becomes precious and highly valuable in the eyes of God; he appretiates and eſtimates ſuch a man as his peculiar treaſure, which naturally and neceſſarily draws and ſpreads the wing of Divine care over him for his protection, *Deut.* 33. 12. *The beloved of the Lord ſhall dwell in ſafety by him, and the Lord ſhall cover him all the day long.* Things of greateſt value are always kept in ſafeſt cuſtody.

3. Upon whoſoever the ſpecial love of God is ſet, there all events and iſſues of troubles are ſure to be over ruled to the eternal advantage

of that Soul, *Rev.* 8. 28. Which consideration alone is sufficient to unsting all the troubles in the world, and make the beloved of the Lord shout and triumph in the midst of tribulations.

But let us enter yet further into this glorious Chamber of Divine love, and more particularly view the admirable properties thereof, though when all is done, it will be found a love passing knowledge; our thought may admire, but can never measure it.

1. And first you will find it an ancient love whose spring is in eternity it self. Believer, God is thine ancient friend, who foresaw and loved thee, before thou, yea, before this world was in beeing, the fruits and effects thereof though thereof in time, but the root that produces them was before all times, *Prov.* 8. 22, 23. *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.* Thus was the love of God contriving, and providing the best of mercies in Christ for us; while as yet there were no such creatures in the world, nor a world prepared to receive us.

2. The love of God to his people is a free and altogether undeserved love; it must needs be so seeing it prevented our very beeing, which had it not done, yet no motives had been found in us, to allure it to us more than others. *Deut.* 7. 7. *The Lord did not set his love upon you nor chuse you, because ye were more in number than any people, (for ye were the fewest of all people) but because the Lord loved you.* So that we can

not find one ſtone of our own merit in the foundation of this love; for thoſe whom it embraceeth in its arms are, *Immirentes, & malè merentes*, ill deſerving as well as undeſerving, we were loved of GOD, before we were lovely in our ſelves; it is freely pitched upon us, not purchaſed by us, *Iſa.* 43. 24.

3. The love of GOD to Believers is a bountiful love, ſtreaming forth continually mercies both innumerable and invaluable to their Souls and Bodies, 2 *Pet.* 1. 3. Chriſtian, it would quickly weary thine arm, yea, let me ſay the arm of an Angel; but to writ down the thouſandth part of the mercies which have already flowed out of this precious fountain to thee; though all thou haſt received, or ſhalt receive in this world, are but the beginnings of mercy, and firſt-fruits of the love of God to thee; 'tis the love of God which daily loads thee with benefits, as the expreſſion is, *Pſal.* 68. 19. And if thou art daily loaded with mercies, what an heap of mercies will the mercies of thy whole life be.

4. The love of God to believers is a diſtinguiſhing love, not the proportion of all, no, nor yet of many beſides thee, 1 *Cor.* 1. 26. The generality of the world dwell in the room of common Providence, not in the Chamber of ſpecial love into which God hath admitted thee; this conſideration ſhould make thee break out in admiration, as it is, *Joh.* 14. 22. Lord, how is it that thou wilt *manifeſt thy ſelf to me, & not to the world.*

5. The love of God to believers, is a love

transcendent to all creature love, it moves in a higher Sphere than the love of any creature doth, *Rom.* 5. 6, 7, 8. We read of *Jacob's* love to *Rachel*, which is so celebrated in the Sacred story for the fervour of it, and yet all that it enabled him to suffer was but the Summers heat and the Winters cold; a trifle to what the love of Christ engaged, and enabled him to suffer for thy sake. We read also of the love of *David* to *Absalom* which made him wish, would God I had died for thee, O *Absalom*, my son, my son. This love was only manifested in a wish, which happily might have retracted too, had there been an exchange to be made indeed; but the life of Christ, worth millions of his life, was actually and willingly staked down for thy Soul. We read of the love of one Disciple manifested to another Disciple in a cup of cold water; but Christ hath manifested his love to thee in powring out his warmest heart blood for thy redemption. Oh what a transcendent love is the Divine love!

6. To conclude, (though alas, little is said of the love of GOD,) it is an everlasting and unchangeable love. Hills and Mountains shall sooner start from their *Bases*, than his loving kindness depart from his people, *Isa.* 54. 10. Though he afflict us, still he loves us, *Psal.* 89. 32, 33. Nay though we grieve him, yet still he loves us, *Mark* 16. 7. *Tell the* Disciples, *and tell* *Peter*. *Peter* had grieved Christ, denied Christ, yet will he not renounce nor cast off *Peter*.

SECT.

SECT. II.

WEll then, if God have opened to your ſouls ſuch a Chamber of love, where your ſouls may be raviſhed with daily delights, as well as ſecured from danger and ruine: O that you would enter into it by Faith, and dwell for ever in the love of God! I mean, clear up your intereſt in it, and then ſolace your Souls in the delights of it. Need I to uſe an Argument, or ſpend one Motive to preſs you to enter into ſuch an Heaven upon Earth? If the deadneſs of thy heart doth need it, take into conſideration, Reader, theſe few that follow;

1. *Motive.* Ponder with thy ſelf how ſad and miſerable thy caſe will be with thee in the days of calamity and diſtreſs, if the love of God ſhal then be clouded to thy Soul; in thoſe days ſuch as love thee will either be abſent from thee, or impotent to help thee, all thy friends and familiars may be removed far off, and whither then wilt thou turn ſhould God be far off too? This was that evil which *Jerrmiah* ſo vehemently deprecated, *Chap.* 17. *v.* 17. *Be not a terrour unto me, thou art my hope in the day of evil. q. d.* O Lord my Soul depends upon refreſhment, and comfort from thee, when all the ſprings of earthly comfort are dried up, Shouldſt thou be a terrour to me in the day of evil, it will be the moſt terrible diſappointment that ever befel my Soul, if thou be kind, I care not who be cruel if I have the love of God, I value not the hatred

of men; but if GOD be a terrour, who or what can be a comforter? The love of GOD is the alone refuge to which the gracious Soul retreats upon all creature diſappointments, and failings. This therefore is the main thing to be feared againſt the evil day.

2. *Mot.* The knowledge and aſſurance of the love of GOD is a mercy attainable by a gracious Soul, notwithſtanding the imperfections of Grace. *Peter* had his falls and failings as well as other Chriſtians, yet when Chriſt puts the queſtion home to him, *John* 21. 15. *Simon ſon of Jonas loveſt thou me more than theſe?* he is able to return a clear poſitive anſwer; *Yea, Lord thou knoweſt that I love thee.* Study thy heart Chriſtian, and ſtudy the Scriptures; if thou canſt find the ſincere love of GOD in thy heart, that Scripture will clear the love of GOD to thy Soul, 1 *John* 4. 19. *We love him becauſe he firſt loved us.* If thou lay thine hand upon a ſtone-wall, and feel it warm, thou mayeſt conclude the Sun beams have ſhone upon it; for warmth is not naturally in dead ſtones. Our love to GOD is but the reflex beam of his love to us, and we know there can be no reflex without a direct beam. Thouſands of Chriſtians do at this day actually poſſeſs the raviſhing ſenſe of Divine love, whoſe fears and complaints have been the ſame that thine now are; that GOD who indulged this favour to them, can do as much for thee.

3. *Mot.* Think how well thou wilt be provided for the worſt and difficulteſt times, when the love of GOD ſhal be well ſecured to thy

Soul; when the love of GOD, *i. e.* the ſenſe of his love is once ſhed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghoſt, which for that end, among others, is given unto us, we ſhall then be able to glory in tribulation, *Rom.* 5. 3, 5. We may then bid defiance to all the adverſe powers of hell, and earth, and ſay now do your worſt: *we are out of your reach, and above all your terrours and affrights. Be adviſed then to ſit cloſe to this work: clear but this point once, and the worſt is paſt. O lye at the feet of GOD night and day, give him no reſt, take no denial from him, fill thy mouth with lies and argunents, tell him, Lord, it is neither for corn nor wine that I ſeek thee, but only for thy love; beſtow thy other gifts on whom thou wilt, only ſeal up thy love to my Soul.*

And laſtly, *I adviſe thee*, Reader, *to be exceeding careful, when GOD admits thee into the ſenſe of his love, to ſhut the door behind thee, leſt thy ſoul be ſoon expelled thence, by the ſubtilty of ſatan, who envies nothing more, than ſuch an happineſs as this: that envious ſpirit totally deſpairs of the leaſt drop of ſuch a mercy, and therefore ſwells with envy at thine enjoyment of it; but if ever thou faſten thy hand of faith upon his mercy, looſe not thy hold by every objection with which he will rap thy fingers.*

1. If he object the many *ſharp afflictions, and manifold rods of GOD upon thee, call not the love of GOD in queſtion for that; but remember what he ſaith*, Heb. 2. 6. *Whom the* Lord *loveth, he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth.* Fatherly corrections are, ſo far from being inconſiſtent *with the love GOD, that his love is rather queſtionable without them, than for them; they are all love tokens, not marks of hatred.*

2. Yield

2. Yield not up thy claim and title to the love of God, because he sometimes hides away his face from thee; thou knowest the sun is up, and going on in its regular course, in the darkest and closest day. *My God, my God*; saith Christ himself; *Why hast thou forsaken me*? believe he is still thy God, and his love immutable, when the sense and manifestations thereof do fail.

3. Call not the Love of God into question, because of thy great vileness and unworthiness; say not when thou most loathest thy self, GOD must needs loath thee too: he can love where thou loathest. *Return, return, O* Shulamite, *return, return, that we may look upon thee: what will ye see in the* Shulamite? *as it were the company of two armies.* The Spouse was exceeding beautiful in the eyes of others, when most base and vile in her own: What would you see in the *Shulamite*? alas, there is nothing in me, at the best, but Conflicts, and Wars, betwixt Grace and Corruption, as it were betwixt two armies, *Cant.* 6. 16.

3. Quit not thy claim to the Love of God because he seems to shut out thy prayers, and delays to answer the long continued desires and importunities of thy soul in some cases. *David* would neither censure his God, no nor call in question his interest in him, because of such a delay and silence, *Psal.* 22. 1, 2. *My God, my God*, The claim is doubled, *ver.* 1. and yet in the next breath he saith, *I cry in the day time, but thou heares not, and in the night season, and am not silent.*

Thus

Thus I have offered you some advice and assistance, how to secure your selves in these Divine Attributes, *viz.* The Power, Wisdom, Faithfulness, Unchangeableness, care, and Love of GOD, as in so many sanctuaries, and comfortable Refuges in the dayes of common Calamities. It is noted even of the *Egyptians*, when the storm of Hail was coming upon the land, *Exod.* 9. 20. *He that feared the word of the Lord among the servants of* Pharaoh, *made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses.* Let not an *Egyptian* take more care of his beasts, than Christians of their Souls. Stormy days are coming, GOD hath provided you a refuge, and given you seasonable premonitions, and calls from Heaven, to hasten into them, before Desolations come. The Lord help us to hear his Calls, and comply with them, which will be as much our Priviledge, as it is our Duty. And so much of the *fifth Proposition*, viz. That GODS Attributes, Promises, and Providences, are prepared for the security of his people in the greatest distresses that befal them in the World.

PROPOSITION VI.

That none but GODS own people are taken into these Chambers of Security, or can expect his special protection in evil times.

SECT. I.

THis *Proposition* describes and clears the qualified subject of this Priviledge. GODS

own people, and none but ſuch can warrantably claim ſpecial protection in evil times, and this is conſonant to the current account of Scripture, *Iſa.* 3. 10, 11. *Say ye unto the righteous, it ſhall be well with him, Wo to the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him.* He ſpeaks concerning the day of *Jeruſalem*'s ruin, and *Judah's* fall as appears *ver.* 8. So great a difference will God make even in this world, betwixt the righteous, and the wicked. In *Nah.* 1, you have alſo a terrible day deſcribed, wherein *Baſhan, Carmel*, and *Lebanon*, the moſt pleaſant and fruitful places of the land ſhall languiſh, *ver.* 4. The mountains ſhall quake, the hills melt, the earth, and thoſe that dwell therein burnt up, *ver.* 5. The indignation and fury of God poured out like fire, *v.* 6. The priviledged people in this terrible day are God's own people, they only are taken into ſecurity, *ver.* 7. The Lord is good, a ſtrong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that truſt in him, *i. e.* he ſo knoweth them as to care and provide for them in that evil day, and ſo throughout the whole Scripture, you ſhall find the Promiſes of protection ſtill made to the people of God. When the *Chaldean* Army, like a devouring fire was ready to ſeize upon the land, the ſinners in *Sion* were afraid; fearfulneſs ſurprized the hypocrites, for who among us (ſay they) ſhall dwell with devouring fire, and everlaſting burning? Yes, ſaith GOD, ſome there are that ſhall abide that day, viz. *He that walketh righteouſly, and ſpeaketh uprightly; he ſhall dwell on high; his place of defence ſhall be*

be the munition of rocks. i. e. God will be a sanctuary to them, when others shall be as stubble before the flames, *Isa.* 33. 14, 15, 16.

But for the right stating of this Proposition, three things must be heedfully adverted.

1. That all good men are not always exempted from the stroke of outward Calamities; in that sense the righteous may perish, and merciful men be taken away, yea, they may perish, in love, and be taken away in mercy from the evil to come, *Isa.* 57. 1, 2. *Mica.* 7. 1, 2.

2. That all wicked men are not always exposed to eternal miseries, but *a just man may perish in his righteousness, and a wicked man prolong his life in his wickedness,* Eccl. 7. 15.

3. But in this sense, we are to understand the Proposition, that none, but the people of God, have right, by promise, to his special protections in evil days, and that all such shall either be preserved from the stroke of calamities, or from the deadly sting, namely Eternal Ruin, by them; though they should fall by the hands of enemies, yet they die, as *Josiah* did in peace, 2 *Kings* 22. 19, 20. If they be taken away, it is but out of the way of greater mischiefs; death doth but lay the saints in their beds of rest, when it hurries away others into everlasting miseries: if they be not excused from troubles, yet their troubles are sure to be sanctified to their eternal good, *Rom.* 8. 28. And the Lord will be with them in their troubles, *Psal.* 91. 15. *Isa.* 41. 10.

Two things remain to be considered, before we

we finish this last Proposition: *viz.*

1. Who the people of God are?
2. Why this Priviledge is peculiar to them?

1. Who are the people of God? The Scripture describes them two ways; Negatively, and Positively; Negatively, in opposition to those who are not the people of God, but are (1) the servants of sin, obeying it in the lust of it, which the people of God neither are, nor dare to do, *Rom.* 6. 11, 12. *&c.* (2) The men of this world, who have the portion in this life, savouring, and minding the things of the world only, whereas the people of God are called out of the world, *John* 17. 16. and principally study, and labour after the higher concernments of the world to come, *Rom.* 8. 5. (3) The vassals of Satan doing his lust, and in subjection to his power, *Acts.* 26. 18. *Ephes.* 2. 2. from which bondage the people of GOD are made free. (4) Nor yet are they their own, living wholly to themselves, and seeking only their own ends, as others do, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19, 20. These, all these are not the people of God. God will not own them for such; they but deceive themselves in thinking; and calling themselves so: but then positively. They are (1) a people regenerated, and born again, *Joh.* 1. 13. These regenerations gives them both the Essence and denomination of the people of God: it is as impossible to be the children of God, without regeneration, as it is to be the children of men without generation. (2) They are a people in cove-

covenant with God, Ezek. 16. 8. *I entered into a covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine.* For in this Covenant they give themselves to the Lord, 2. *Cor.* 8. 5. They avouch the Lord to be their God, and make over themselves to him to be his people, Jer. 31. 33. devoting unto God all that they are, their souls, and bodies, with every faculty and member inclusively, *Rom.* 12. 1. *Luke* 10. 27. All that they have, *Rom.* 11. 36. all is dedicated, and devoted to the Lords use and service, and these only are the people of God.

2. The last thing to be cleared is, Why the people of God, and none beside them; have peculiar priviledge of an hiding place in the day of trouble; and the grounds of it are:

1. Because they only have special interest in God, and propriety is the ground on which they claim and expect protection, I am thine, save me, *Psal.* 119. 94. Upon this very ground it was, that *David* encouraged himself in one of his greatest plunges, and distresses of his whole life, 1 *Sam.* 30. 6: *But* David *encouraged himself in the Lord his God.*

2. The people of God only are at peace with God; and where there is no peace, there can be no protection: the Harbours and Garrisons of one Kingdom never receive into their protection, the Subjects of another Kingdom, that are in open Hostility against them. Now there is open War betwixt God, and the wicked, *Psal.* 7. 11. *Zech.* 11 8. Till they have peace with God, they can claim no protection from God.

3. The

3. The promises of protection are made only to Gods people, and where there is no promise, there can be no warrantable claim to protection, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. Common providence may shelter them for a time, but the saints only have the keys of promises which open the Chambers or Attributes of God to them.

4. None but the people of God walk in the ways of God, and none but those that walk in his way can groundedly expect his protection; for so runs the promise, 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. *I am with you, whilest you are with me, i. e.* I am with you, by way of Protection, Direction, Supportation, and Salvation: whilest you are with me in the duties of Obedience, and exercises of your graces, see that you love, fear, and obey me; and then depend upon it, I will look after, and take care of you.

5. To conclude, The people of God only flee to God for sanctuary, and cast themselves upon him for protection, *Psal* 56. 3. *At what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee, Psal.* 18. 2. *The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust, my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high-tower.* This their confidence in God, and reliance upon him, engages him to protect them in their dangers, *Isa.* 26. 3. All others put themselves out of Gods protection, by making flesh their arm, and so giving the honour of God to the creature, *Jer.* 17. 5. And thus much for clearing this last proposition also. All that remains, will be dispatched in brief and close Application of the Point this opened and confirmed.

CHAP. XII.

Containing the firſt Uſe of the Point, in ſeveral informing Conſectaries, and Deductions of truth from it.

SECT. I.

Conſect. 1. FRom the whole of this Diſcourſe, we may be informed, *What a miſerable, and ſhiftleſs People all thoſe will be in times of trouble, who have no ſpecial intereſt in God or the Promiſes.* Sad and lamentable was the caſe of *Saul*, as it is by himſelf expreſſed, 1 *Sam.* 28.15. *I am ſore diſtreſſed, for the* Philiſtines *make war againſt me, and God is departed from me, and anſwereth me no more.* It is a wonderful, and unaccountable thing, how carnal men and women ſubſiſt, and bear up, when their earthly props, and hopes; ſink under, and fail them; ſo long as any creature-comfort is left, thither they will retreat, for relief, and ſuccour; but if all fail as quickly they may, Whither will they turn for comfort, having not a God, nor a Promiſe to flee to? which the people of GOD can do, when all things els fail them, *Heb.* 3.17. Their different conditions in the day of trouble, is clearly expreſſed in *Zeph.* 2.3,4. *Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment, ſeek righ-*

righteouſneſs, ſeek meekneſs, it may be ye ſhall be hid in the day of the Lords anger. There is GODs *may be*, which is better ſecurity than Mans *ſhall be*, for their temporary deliverance; But what ſhall become of others, that have no refuge, but in the creature? Why, the miſery and ſhiftleſneſs of their condition, follows in the next words; Gaza *ſhall be forſaken, and* Aſhkelon a *deſolation, they ſhall drive out* Aſhdod *at noon day, and* Ekron *ſhal be rooted up. i e.* All their earthly ſecurities ſhal fail them: their ſtrong hold ſhall not ſecure them, they ſhall find no ſhelter in the ſcorching heat of the day of trouble. *Moab, Aſhdod,* and *Ekron,* have no more benefit, by the promiſes made to *Sion,* than the Inhabitants of *Rome,* can claim by the Charter of *London.* If a wicked or hypocritical perſon cry to God in his diſtreſs, he will not hear him, *Prov.* 1. 25, 26. *Job* 27. 9. but will bid him go to his earthly refuges, which he hath choſen; if he go to the promiſes, knock at theſe doors of hope, they cannot relieve him, being all made in Chriſt to believers; if to the Name and Attributes of GOD, all the dores are ſhut againſt them, *Pſal.* 34. 16. There are ſeven dreadful Aggravations of a wicked man's troubles; (1.) When troubles come upon him, the curſe of GOD follows him into his carnal refuges, *Jer.* 17. 5. *Curſed be the man, that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm, and whoſe heart departeth from the Lord.* Trouble is the arrow, and this curſe the venom of the *arrow,* which makes the *wound incurable.*

2. When troubles fall upon him from without

out, a guilty conſcience will terrifie him from within. So that the mind can give no relief to the body; but both ſink under their own weights it is not ſo with the people of GOD, they have inward relief under outward preſſures, 2*Cor*4. 16

3. The guſts and ſtorms of wicked mens troubles may blow them into Hell, and hurry them into eternal deſtruction: if Death march towards them upon the pale Horſe, hell always follows him, *Rev.* 6. 8.

4. If troubles and diſtreſſes overwhelm their hearts, they can give them no vent or eaſe by prayer, faith and reſignation to God, as his People uſe to do, 1 *Sam.* 1. 18.

5. When their troubles and diſtreſſes come, then comes the hour, and power of their temptation, and to ſhun ſorrow they will fall into ſin, having no promiſe to be kept in the hour of temptation, as the Saints have, *Rev.* 3. 10.

6. When their troubles come they will be left alone in the midſt of them; theſe are their burthens, and they alone muſt bear them. Gods gracious, comfortable, ſupporting preſence, is only with his own people.

7. If trouble or death come upon them as a ſtorm, they have no Anchor of Hope to drop in the ſtorm, *The wicked is driven away in his wickedneſs: but the righteous hath hope in his death, Prov.* 14. 32. by all which appears that a Chriſtleſs perſon is a moſt helpleſs, and ſhiftleſs creature in the day of trouble.

2. *Conſect.* Secondly, Hence it follows, *That Chriſtians ought not to droop like other men in the day*

day of trouble. A Wicked mans boldneſs, and a Chriſtians cowardlineſs in times of affliction, are alike ungrounded and uncomly; Why ſhould thy heart Chriſtian deſpond and ſink at this rate, upon this rate, upon the proſpect of approaching troubles? Are there not ſafe and comfortable Chambers taken up, and provided for thee againſt that day? Is not the name of the Lord a ſtrong tower into which thou mayeſt run and be ſafe? The heart of a good man, ſaith *Chryſoſtome*, ſhould at all times be like the higher Heavens, ſerene, tranquil and clear, whatever Thunders and Lightnings, Storms and Tempeſts, trouble and terrifie the lower world. If a man have a good roof over his head, where he can ſit dry and warn, what need he trouble himſelf, to hear the Winds roar, the Lightnings flaſh, and the Reins pour down without doors? Why, this is thy priviledge, Chriſtian, *A man* (to wit, the Man *CHRIST IESVS*) *ſhall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt: as rivers of water in a dry place, as the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land*; *Iſa.* 32. 2. Art thou in Chriſt and in the Covenant, give me then one good reaſon for thy dejections in a day of trouble, or if thou haſt none to give, hearken to theſe Reaſons againſt it.

1. If thou be in Chriſt, thy ſins are forgiven thee, and why ſhould not a pardoned Soul be a chearful Soul in adverſity? Afflictions may buz and hum about thee, like Bees that have loſt their ſting, but they can never hurt thee.

2. If

2. If thou be in Chriſt, thy GOD is with thee in all thy troubles, and how can thy heart ſink or faint in ſuch a preſence? Let them that are alone in troubles fail under them, but don't thou do ſo, that art ſurrounded with Almighty Power, Grace and Love, *Iſa.* 43. 1, 2.

3. If thou be in Chriſt, thy greateſt afflictions ſhall prove thy beſt Friends and Benefactors, *Rom.* 8. 28. Sure then, thou art more afraid than hurt, thou miſtakeſt thy beſt Friends, for thy worſt Enemies; thou and thy Afflictions ſhall part more comfortably than you met.

4. If thou be in Chriſt, thy Treaſure is ſafe, thy eternal happineſs is out of the reach of thine Enemies, *Luke* 12. 4. *Luke* 10. 42. And if that be ſafe thou haſt no cauſe to be ſad; to droop, and tremble at the hazard of earthly comforts, whileſt Heavenly and Eternal things are ſafe, is as if a man that had got ten his Pardon from the King, and had it ſafe in his Boſom, ſhould be found weeping upon the way home, becauſe he hath loſt his Staff or Glove. Theſe reaſons are ſtrong againſt the dejections of GODS people under outward troubles; but yet I am ſenſible that all the reaſoning in the world will not prevent their dejections, except they will take pains to clear up their Intereſt in GOD againſt ſuch a day, *Pſal.* 18. 2. and will act their Faith by way of adherence and dependance upon God in the want of former light and evidence, *Iſ.* 50. 10. And laſtly, that they keep their conſciences pure and inviolate; which will be a ſpring of comfort in the mideſt of troubles, 2 *Corrin.* 1. 12.

3. *Con-*

3. *Conſect.* Thirdly, *It hence appears to be the greateſt folly, and vanity in the world to make any thing but God our refuge in the day of trouble.* This practice as you heard but now, is under Gods curſe, and that which is curſed of God, cannever be comfortable to us. It is an honour peculiar to God, the right of Heaven, and therefore curſed Sacriledge to beſtow it on the Creature. We read of ſome that make lies their refuge, and hide themſelves under Falſhood, thinking when the overflowing Scourge comes it ſhall not come nigh unto them, *Iſa.* 28. 15. They will truſt to their wits and policies, they will fawn and flatter, lye and diſſemble, caſt themſelves into a thouſand ſhapes and forms to ſave themſelves; but all in vain, the Flood ſhall ſweep away their refuge of lyes. Others make Riches their truſt and confidence, *Prov.* 10. 15. *The rich mans wealth is his ſtrong city.* If Enemies come, their money ſhall be their ranſom; but oh, what a poor refuge will this be? It may betray, but cannot ſecure them, *Behold, ſaith God, I will ſtir up the* Medes *againſt them, which ſhall not regard ſilver and as for gold, they ſhall not delight in it,* *Iſa.* 13. 17. Riches profit not in the day of wrath, *Prov.* 11. 4. *Job* bleſſed God in the day of his adverſity, that he had not made Gold his Hope, or the fine Gold his Confidence, *Job* 31. 24. Bleſs not thou thy ſelf that thou haſt ſuch things to beſtow thy hope and truſt upon. Others make Men their Refuge, eſpecially great and powerful Men, but to how little

little purpoſe is it! *Put not your truſt in Princes, nor in the Son of Man, in whom there is no help, pſal.* 146. 3, 4. They cannot keep their Crowns upon their Heads, no, not their Heads upon their Shoulders, the greateſt Men are but Duſt, and what can Duſt do to Duſt? Three things aggravate their miſery, who miſplace their Confidence by beſtowing it on any Creature. 1. That Creature will certainly deceive them, men are deceitful men, *pſal.* 62. 9. Riches are deceitful riches, 1 *Tim.* 6. 16. Every thing you lean on beſide God, will ſtart aſide, like a deceitful bow, *pſal.* 78. 57. (2) The diſappointment of your hopes from the creature, will enflame your affliction, and greatly aggravate your ſorrow, 2 *King.* 18. 21. The broken reeds of Egypt will not only fail, but pierce you. (3) In a word, God will take none into his protection, who make any thing beſides himſelf their hope and confidence; if we fly from God to the creature, God will ſay to the creature, thou ſhalt go, except I have thy dependence, thou ſhalt never have my protection; where I have no honour, thou ſhalt have no comfort.

4. *Conſect.* Fourthly, the former diſcourſe, yeelds us alſo this comfortable concluſion, *That what ever confuſions, diſſolations, and troubles be in the earth, the Church and People of God can never be wholly exterminated, and deſtroyed, ſeeing ſuch a ſecure refuge is prepared for them of God,* Pſal. 102. 28. *The children of thy ſervants ſhall continue, and their ſeed ſhall be eſtabliſhed before thee.*

Which

Which is assigned as the true reason of its perpetuity and safety, *Psal.* 48. 3. *God is known in her palaces, for a refuge.* The Church's Enemies have tried the utmost of their policies & powers in all ages against it, but to no purpose: whilest they have been plotting and persecuting, the preserved Remnant have been singing their Song upon *Alamoth*, even praises to their great preserver; though they have no external visible defence, yet are they as safe, as salvation it self can make them, *for salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks, Isa.* 26. 1, 2. Four things are exceeding remarkable in the *Churches* preservation: (1) No people were so fiercely opposed by the powers of this world, *The Kings of the earth have set themselves, and the Rulers have taken counsel together, Psal.* 2. 2. All methods and artifices have been tryed, sometimes to jeer and scoff them out of the Religion: so did the Apostate *Julian*, and sometimes by cruel tortures, to affright them from their Religion; the variety and more than barbarous inhumanity, whereof the Church Histories gives as a sad and amazing account. (2) Under these cruel Persecutions, they have seemed to be utterly lost, to the eye of sense and reason; *I am left alone*, said *Elijah, and they seek my life*, 1 Kings 19. 10. *By whom*, Lord, *shall* Jacob *arise said* Amos, *for he is very small*? Amos 7. 2. (3) Notwithstanding all which, the Church hath overlived all its dangers; it is the true *Phœnix*, which hath outlived the Deludge. (4) Such deliverances are proper and peculiar to the Church

Church alone: no people, beſides the people of GOD, have ſuch ſalvations upon record. The great and famous Monarchies of the world, have daſhed one another *to pieces*, like *earthen Pott ſheards*; ------*Sic Medis ademit*
Aſſyrio, ſyroq; tulit moderamina Perſes.
And all this by vertue of that promiſe, Jer. 30. 11. *For I am with thee*, ſaith the Lord, *to ſave thee, though I make a full end of all Nations, whither I have ſcattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee.*

5. *Conſect.* Fifthly, to conclude: If this be ſo, *then it is a deep and dangerous policy of* Satan, *to ſhut up our refuge in GOD againſt us, as much may be in times of trouble.* Satan, like a cunning Fowler, deſpairs of getting the birds in his net, except he can beat them out of their coverts; it is therefore his great deſign, to eſtrange and alienate the Saints from their GOD, as much as he can, thereby to cut off their retreat to him in times of trouble; a miſchief which the people of GOD have alwayes vehemently deprecated, *Pſal.* 102. 2. *Jer.* 17. 17. And, O that we would be war of it! and ſhun this miſchief, by our ſeaſonable preventing watchfulneſs. There are, among others, three ſpecial Projects of Satan, whereby he manages this miſchievous deſign againſt the people of God.

1. By drawing their Conſciences under guilt, on purpoſe to deſtroy the liberty, freedom, and childlike confidence of their ſouls, in their addreſſes to God. This, if any thing in the world, will do it, *Job* 11. 14, 15. What a loſs will that poor

poor ſoul be at, in times of trouble, whoſe grumbling and condemning conſcience will not ſuffer him to look up chearfully and believingly in the face of its God, and Father, having loſt its ancient freedom at the throne of grace?

2. By prevailing with them to neglect and intermit the courſe of their daily duties, and thereby to let down their communion with God, and in a great meaſure loſe their acquaintance with him. This is a dangerous policy of the Devil, and an unſpeakable prejudice to the ſoul: Oh Chriſtian, take heed of a lazy ſlothful ſpirit, or a vain and earthly heart which will eaſily ſuffer the duties of Religion to be juſtled aſide, and put by for every trivial occaſion; eſpecially beware of ſlight, formal, ſuperficial, and dead-hearted performances of duty, which is little better than the intermiſſion of them, it may indeed prevent the ſcandal, but can never give thee the comforts of Religion.

3. By becluding their intereſt in God, and darkening their title and evidences, by thick clouds of doubts and fears. This is the ſad caſe of many a poor Chriſtian, in a day of trouble, with-out fightings, with-in fears. Brethren, I beſeech you, think often what thoſe things are, which uſually put men into ſuch frights and ſtreights, when eminent dangers ſtare them in the face, what it is that daunts and damps the hearts of Chriſtians at ſuch times; and as you value the peace and freedom of your ſouls with God, give not matter for your conſciences to reproach you with miſ-ſpent time, indulged ſins, ne-

neglected duties, formality or hypocrisie in duties, siniſter, and by-ends in your tranſactions with God or man: preſerve the purity and peace of your conſciences, as you would preſerve your two eyes; if by ſuch wiles the Devil cannot bar you from your God, or ſhut up your refuge in him, your outward troubles can do you no hurt.

The ſecond Uſe of Direction and Advice.

SECT. II.

THe providence of God in theſe days, giving us ſuch loud warnings of approaching judgment; How are all that are wiſe in heart, and of underſtanding of the times, now more eſpecially concerned to clear their intereſt in theſe bleſſed Attributes of God, which have here been opened, as their only refuge in the evil day. Let me therefore perſuade, and preſs you to betake your ſelves to GOD, your refuge, and ſtrong hold in trouble, and that more eſpecially in theſe two great duties: *viz.*

1. Of Fervent Supplication.
2. Of Univerſal Reſignation.

1. Betake your ſelves to God by fervent Prayer and Supplication. Ler me ſay of theſe times, as Holy Mr. *Perkins* did of his, *Non ſunt iſta litigandi, ſed orandi tempora.* Theſe are no times for Chriſtians to contend and ſtrive one with another, but with their united crys to ſtrive with God, and, among other requeſts, ſtrongly to enforce and follow home, that of *David*, *Pſal.* 71. 2, 3. *Deliver me in thy righteouſneſs, and cauſe me to eſcape, incline thine ear unto me, and ſave me,*

be thou my ſtrong habitation, whereunto I may continually reſort. That's a true and weighty Obſervation of *Auſtine*, *Non facile inveniuntur præſidia in adverſitate, quæ non fuerint in pace quæſita. A refuge is not to be found in trouble, except it be provided before hand in peace. For this,* ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *ſhal every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou maiſt be found, ſurely in the floods of great waters they ſhall not come nigh unto him,* Pſ. 32. 6. Had not *Noah* prepared and ſecured himſelf in the *Ark*, before the floods of great water came, he had not ſate as he did, *Medis tranquillus in undis: Sleeping quietly, when others were periſhing in the waters.* Gather your ſelves therefore together, before the Decree bring forth; ſeek the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, be more frequent, and more fervent in Prayer, now than ever; you have all the encouragements in the world, to incite you to this duty: the nature of your God is exceeding pitiful, tender, and compaſſionate, *Jam.* 5. 11. The endeared relations betwixt God and you, gives ſingular encouragement of ſucceſs: Shall not God hear his own Elect, which cry unto him day and night? Luk. 18. 7. The ſweet returns and anſwers of former Prayers, are ſo many motives and encouragements, to follow cloſe that thriving trade, Pſal. 32. 1, 2, 3. And above all, your prevalent Advocate in the heavens ſhould encourage you, to come frequently and boldly to *the throne of grace*, that you may obtain mercy, and find grace, to help in the time of need, *Heb.* 4 16. In two things, I ſhall briefly offer a little Direction here: viz.

1. As

1. As to the matter of Prayer.
2. As to the manner

1. As to the matter of Prayer, I mean such as the state and condition of the times, now more especially suggests.

(1) Unite your Prayers, and cry mightily to the Lord, that if it be his good pleasure, this cup of wrath which seems to be mingled and prepared, may pass from his people. Now cry to God as they are directed to do, *Joel* 2. 17. *Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?* O pray, That *England* may not be delivered into the hands of blood-thirsty *Papists*, that the golden Candlestick may not be removed; that Idolatry may not return into those places where God hath been so sweetly Worshipped; that a Land so peculiarly blessed with Gospel-Light, wherein so many thousand sons, and daughters have been born to God, may not at last become an *Aceldama*, a great Shambles, to quarter out the Limbs of his dear Saints; that the pleasant Plant of Reformation, planted with his own right hand, and watered with so many tears, yea with so much blood, may not at last be rooted up by the wild Boar out of the Forrest!

(2) Pray indefinently, That you may be kept from the sins and temptations of the times. O watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation; if you cannot prevail with God, to turn away his anger, yet be importunate with him, that you may be kept from sin, that if you lose

your outward peace, you may be able to keep inward peace, that you may never sacrifice your consciences, to save your flesh; that you may never fall under the displeasure of God, to avoid the rage of men. Ah friends, we little think what a fearful havock an hour of temptation will make in such a professing Nation as this is; then shall many be offended, *Matth.* 24. 10. O pray, that you may never give offence to others by scandal, or take offence your selves at the ways of God, whatever sufferings and sharp trials shal come.

(3) Pray earnestly for the sanctification of all your troubles, to your eternal good; an unsanctified comfort never did any man good, and a sanctified trouble never did any man hurt; be more earnest therefore with God, rather to have your troubles sanctified, than prevented; to get the blessing, than to avoid the smart of them if they cannot be turned away from you; pray they may be turned to your salvation.

2. Betake your selves to God your refuge by Faith, resigning and committing all into his hands, *Now the just shall live by faith, Heb.* 10. 38. The more you can trust God, the more you secure your selves from danger; he that can live by *Faith*, shall never die by *Fear*, and be sure to inform your selves will in two things, *viz.*

1. What it is to trust God over all.
2. What grounds you have so to do.

1. Be well instructed in the Nature of this duty; there are six things imported in such acts of Resignation.

1. An

1. An awakened ſenſe of our dangers and hazards. *At what time I am afraid I will truſt in thee, pſal.* 56. 3. Suffering times are reſigning times, 1 *pet.* 4. 19. *Let them that ſuffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their ſouls to him in well doing; as unto a faithful Creator.* And the greater and nearer our dangers are, the more frequent and vigorous ſhould the actings of our faith this way be; Be not far from me, for trouble is near.

2. Reſignation to God neceſſarily implies our renunciation, and diſclaiming of all other refuges. Aſhur *ſhal not ſave us; we will not ride upon horſes, neither will we ſay any more to the work of our hands, ye are our Gods, for in thee the fatherleſs findeth mercy, Hoſ.* 14. 3. He that relies upon God, muſt ceaſe from man; reſignation to God excludes not the uſe of lawful means, but it doth exclude dependence upon them.

3. Reſignation to God is always grounded upon an intereſt in God, we have no warrant, nor encouragment to expect protection from him in trouble; except we can come to him as Children to a Father: It is the filial relation that gives encouragement to this fiducial reſignation; and the clearer that relation and intereſt is, the more bold and confident thoſe acts of Faith will be, P*ſal.* 86. 2. *preſerve my ſoul, for I am holy, O thou my God, ſave thy ſervant that truſteth in thee.* And again, *pſal* 119. 94. *I am thine ſave me.* I ſpeak not here of the firſt act of Faith, which flows not from an intereſt; but gives the Soul an intereſt in God. Nor do I ſay that poor

doubting and timorous Believers whose interest in him is dark and dubious, have no warrant to resign themselves and their concernments into his hands, for it is both their right and duty to do it; But certainly the clearer our interest is, the more facile and comfortable will those acts be.

4. The committing acts of Faith imply a full acknowledgement and owning of Gods power to protect us, be the danger never so imminent, *psal.* 31. 15. *My times are in thy hand, deliver me from the hands of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me. q. d.* O Lord I am fully satisfied, my life is not at the dispose of mine enemies, 'tis not in their hands, but in thine; all the traps and snares they lay for it shall not shorten one minute of my time, I know thy hand is fully able to protect me, and therefore into thine hands I resign my self, and all I have.

5. Resignation involves in it an expectation of help and safety from God, when we see no way of security from men. *O Lord*, saith *Jehoshaphat, We have no might, nor no strength, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are unto thee,* 2 *Chron.* 20. 12. So *David, psal* 62. 5, 6. *My soul wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him, he only is my rock and my salvation, he is my defence, I shal not be moved.*

6. Resignation to God implies the leaving of our selves and our concernments with him to be disposed of according to his good pleasure; the resigning Soul desires the Lord to do with him what he will, and is content to take what lot Divine pleasure shall cast for him, 2 *Sam.* 15. 25

And

And the King said unto Zadok, carry back the Ark of God into the city; if I shal find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again and shew me both it and his habitation; but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him. And so much of the Nature of this duty, that we may understand what to do

2. Next let me shew you what encouragements you that are *the people of God*, have to this duty, and they will appear to be great and many.

1. The Sovereignty and absolute Dominion of God over all Creatures, is a singular encouragement to commit our selves into his hands and trust him over all, *psal.* 59. 9. *Because of his strength will I wait upon thee, for God is my defence.* If a man were in danger amidst a great Army of rude and insolent Souldiers, and were to put himself under the protection of any one, it should be the *General* of that Army, to chuse in such a hand he cannot but be safe, all the Souldiers being at his beck. Christian, thy God into whose hand thou committest thy self, is Lord General of all the Hosts and Armies in Heaven and Earth; how safe must thou then be in his hands?

2. The unsearchable and perfect Wisdom of GOD is a mighty encouragement to commit our selves into his hands, *with him is plenteous redemption, Psal.* 130. *ult. i. e.* Choice and variety of ways and methods to save his people; we are, but GOD never is at a loss to find a door for our escape, 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation.*

3. The infinite tenderness and compassionate-

ness

neſs of our GOD is a ſweet encouragement to reſign and commit our ſelves, and all we have, into his hands, his mercy is incomparably tender towards his people, infinitely beyond whatever any creature felt ſtirring in its own bowels, towards another that came out of its bowels, *Iſa.* 49. 15. This compaſſion of GOD engageth the two forementioned Attributes, *viz.* his Power and Wiſdom, for the preſervation and relief of his people: as often as diſtreſſes befall them. Yea,

4. The very diſtreſſes his people are in, do, as it were, awaken the Almighty power of God for their defence and reſcue; our diſtreſſes are not only proper ſeaſons, but powerful motives to his ſaving power, *Deut.* 36. *For the Lord ſhall judge his people, and repent himſelf for his ſervants, when he ſeeth that their power is gone, and there is none ſhut up or left.* God makes it an argument to himſelf and his people, *Plead it as an argument with him, be not far from me, for trouble is near, for there is none to help.*

5. We have already committed greater and weightier concernments into his hand than the deareſt intereſt we have in this World, we have intruſted our ſouls with him, 1 *Peter* 4. 19. 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. Well therefore may we commit the leſſer, who have intruſted the greater with him; what are our lives, liberties, eſtates, and relations, compared with our Souls, and the eternal ſafety and happineſs of them?

6. The committing act of Faith is the great and only expedient to procure and ſecure the peace

peace and tranquillity of our minds, amidst the distractions and troubles of the present World; the greatest part of our affliction and trouble in such days, is from the working of our own thoughts; *these torments from within are worse than any from without; and the resignation of all to God by Faith is their best and only cure,* Prov. 16. 3. *Commit thy works unto the* Lord, *and thy thoughts shall be established.* A blessed calmness of mind, a sweet tranquillity and settlement of thoughts follows immediately hereupon, *psal.* 94. 19. Oh then, leave all with GOD, and expect a comfortable issue; and for the better settlement, and security of thy peace in times of distraction and trouble, I beseech thee Reader, carefully to watch and guard against these two evils.

1. *Cau.* Beware of *infidelity* and *distrustfulness* of God and his Promises which secretly lurks in thy heart, *and is hugely apt to bewray it self; when great distresses and troubles befall thee, thou will know it by such* Symptomes *as these.* 1. *In an over hasty and eager desire after present deliverance,* Isa. 51. 14. *The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail.* The less Faith, always the more impatience; the more ability to believe, the more patience to wait. 2. It will discover it self in our readiness to close with and catch at sinful mediums and methods of deliverance, *Isa.* 30. 15, 16. And this is the handle of temptation and occasion of Apostacy. *But he that believeth will not make haste, Isa.* 26. 18. No more haste than good speed. 3. It will shew it self in distracting cares

cares and fears about events which will rack the mind with various and endleſs tortures.

2. Caution. *Beware of dejection and deſpondency of mind in evil times, take heed of a poor low ſpirit that will preſently ſink, and give up its hopes upon every appearance and face of trouble; it is a promiſe made unto the righteous,* Pſal. 112. 7. *He ſhall not be afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed truſting in the* Lord. *That uſting of GOD fixes the heart, and the fixing of the heart, fortifies it againſt fear, but I know what many poor Chriſtians will ſay in this caſe, their timorouſneſs and deſpondency ariſes not ſo much from the greatneſs of outward evils, as from the darkneſs and doubtfulneſs of their ſpiritual and inward condition, which doubtleſs is the very truth of the caſe, which brings me to the laſt uſe of this point.*

The third Uſe. *Search and examine your hearts Chriſtians, whether thoſe graces and qualifications unto which GOD hath promiſed protection in evil times may not be found upon an impartial ſearch in your hearts, among which I'le ſingle out three principal ones as the proper matters of your ſelf examination,* Viz.

1. *Uprightneſs of Heart and Way.* 2. *Humiliation for your own and others ſins.* 3. *Righteouſneſs in doing, and meekneſs in ſuffering the will of* GOD.

1. *Uprightneſs and Integrity of heart and way.* To this qualification belong many ſweet promiſes of protection, ſuch is that *Prov.* 2. 7. *He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly,* Pſal. 7. 10. *My defence is of* GOD, *which ſaveth the upright in heart.* If your hearts be true to GOD, theſe promiſes ſhal be truely performed to you, but beware you deceive not your ſelves in ſo great a point as this is; thy heart cannot be an humble upright heart,

YALE

Except 1. *it be a renewed heart*; *the natural heart is always a falſe heart*, 'tis only *regeneration that gives the heart a right temper and frame*; all the *duties and labors in the world can never keep that heart in its courſe, which is not firſt ſet right by GOD by a Principle of Renovation.* (2.) We cannot judge our ſelves upright, except uprightneſs be the ſetled frame and bent of our hearts, *Pſal.* 119. 112, 117. It is not our integrity in one or two ſingle actions, but in the general courſe, and complex frame of our lives and ways, that will prove our integrity to GOD, (3.) Then may we reckon our ſelves upright, when the dread and awe of GODS all-ſeeing eye keeps our hearts and ſteps from turning aſide to iniquity, *Gen.* 39. 9. 2 *Cor.* 2. 17. Thats a ſincere and upright heart indeed, that finds it ſelf at all times, and in all places overawed from ſin, by the eye of GOD upon him. (4) That man's heart alſo is upright with GOD, who purely aims at and deſigns the glory of GOD, as the ſcope and end of his life and actions, who lives not to himſelf; neither acts ultimately and principally for himſelf, but lives to GOD as a perſon dedicated and devoted to him, *Rom.* 14. 7. (5) That heart alſo is upright with GOD, which governs it ſelf and its ways by the directions and rules of the Word, *Pſalm* 119. 11, 24. 133. Happy is that ſoul that finds ſuch evidences of integrity in it ſelf, when it is brought to the trial of it at the Bar of the Word, *Heb.* 4. 12. At the bar of conſcience, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. at the bar of afflictions, *Pſal.* 119. 87. and at the bar of ſtrong temptations, *Gen.* 39. 9. *The eyes of the Lord ſhall run to and fro through the whole earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in the behalf of ſuch whoſe hearts are perfect towards him.*

2. Another gracious qualification, intitling the ſoul to GODS ſpecial protection in the worſt and moſt dangerous times, is the true humiliation for our own and other mens ſins: *Go, ſet a mark, ſaith GOD, upon the foreheads of the men that ſigh and cry for all the abominations that be done in the midſt thereof,* Ezc. 9. 4. Theſe that thus *mourn, when others laugh, ſhall laugh when others mourn.* Lot *was the only mourner in* Sodom, *and he was the only perſon exempted from deſtruction*

him in the ruine and overthrow thereof, 2 Pet. 2. 7. That
a sweet and blessed priviledge mentioned in Isa. 66. 10. Re
joyce ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her all ye tha
love her, rejoyce for joy with her, all ye that mourn fo
her, that ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts o
her consolations, that ye may milk out, and be delighte
with the abundance of her glory. Be contented, Christian
to bear your part in Sions groans and sorrows, you may liv
to bear your part in her triumphs and songs of deliverance
it is an argument of the true publickness, and tenderness o
your spirits for present, and as sweet a sign as can appea
upon your souls, That you are reserved for better days.

3. *Righteousness in doing, and meekness in suffering th*
will of GOD, is another mark or note, distinguishing an
describing those persons whom GOD will preserve in th
evil day. You have both these together in Zeph. 2. 3. See
ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrough
his judgements, seek righteousness, seek meekness, it ma
be ye all be hid in the day of the Lords anger. The eyes o
the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unt
their prayers, 1 Pe. 3. 12 If righteousness bring you into dan
ger, the righteous GOD will take care of you in that dan
ger, and bring you out of it. O its a singular comfort, when
a man can say, it was not my sin, but my duty, that brough
me into trouble: this affliction met me in the path, an
way of my duty, it is for thy sake, O LORD, that I
am in trouble: as the Martyr that held up the Bible a
the stake, saying, This hath brought me hither.

To conclude, Manage all your sufferings for Christ, with
Christian meekness, as righteousness must bring you into
them, so meekness must carry you through them: if you a
venge your selves, you take the cause out of GODS hand,
into your own, but the meek Christian leaves it to the Lord,
and shall never have cause to repent of his so doing. If thou
have an upright heart with GOD, a tender and mournful
heart for sin, and thou suffer with meekness, for righteous-
ness sake, thou art one of these souls to whom that sweet
Voice is directed in my Text.

Come, my People, enter thou into thy Chambers,
and shut thy doors about thee; hide thy self, as it
were, for a little moment, until the indignation be
over-past.

FINIS.

An Epiſtle TO THE READER.

THat Popiſh Axiome is long ſince exploded, that *Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion.* The World doth now ſee, that without knowledge the mind is not good. And look as no knowledge is ſo neceſſary, as that of the Grounds nd Principles of Chriſtian Religion; ſo no way is apt to convey it to the minds of men, as that hich is called Catechiſtical. More knowledge is rdinarily diffus'd, eſpecially amongſt the ignorant nd younger ſort, by one hours Catechiſtical exerſe, than by many hours continued diſcourſes. This ay helps the underſtanding whilſt it provoks the ttention; many elaborate Sermons being loſt hrough the inadvertency of the hearers. Thus, not nly ignorance is cur'd but error alſo is prevented; o many being diſguided becauſe they were not at rſt well grounded in the Principles of the Doctrine f Chriſt. For ſuch reaſons as theſe, we highly approve the labours of this Reverend Brother, in his *Explanation of the Aſſemblies ſhorter Catechiſm.* And aving, to our great ſatisfaction perus'd it our elves, in whole or in part, do readily recommend it nto others: for though he compos'd it at firſt for is own particular Congregation, yet we judge

may be greatly uſeful to all Chriſtians in ge
eſpecially to private Families. The manner of
it in Families muſt be left to the diſcretion o
Maſters and Governors reſpectively: though ye
concur with the Author, and think it adviſable
he hints in one of his Epiſtles) that after a Que
in the Catechiſm is propounded, and an a
without book return'd by one of the Family
ſame perſon, or ſome other be call'd upon to
(if not rehearſe) the explanation of it, the reſt
ing along with him in ſeveral books; by which
their thoughts (which are apt to wander) will
more intent upon what they are about. To
clude, though the *Aſſemblies ſhorter Catechiſm*
be above our recommendation, as having its p
already in the Churches of Chriſt; yet we th
good to give it under our hands, that this Ex
tion of it is very worthy of acceptation.

J. Owen D. D.
Joſeph Caryl
G. Griffeth
Hen. Stubs.
Ed. Calamy
Matt. Barker
Joh. Loder
Joh. Ryter
Nic. Blaikie.
Jam. Janeway
Hen. Vaughan
Will. Maddocks
Joh. Turner
Will. Thomſon.

T. Manton D. D.
Will. Jenkyn
Ch. Fowler
T. Lye
T. Cawton
T. Brooks
Ben. Nealer
Dan. Bull
Char. Morton
Will. Carlake
Rob. Franklin
Matt. Sylveſter
Nat. Vincent

T. Jacomb D.
T. Caſe
T. Warſon
T. Doolittell
Jam. Innes
Joh. Wells
Rich. Mayo
Joh. Hickes
Edw. Veal
Edw. Welt
Edw. Lawrence
Joh. Chelter
Jam. Sharpe.